



इहानलप्रेहद

A Cultural Journal



K. S. Narayanaswamy
(1914-1999)



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Front Cover :

Centenarian Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy

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IN FOCUS

"Music creates order out of chaos: for rhythm imposes unanimity upon the divergent, melody imposes continuity upon the disjointed and harmony imposes compatibility upon the incongruous." These words of the great violinist Yehudi Menuhin are so true of Veena Vidwan Sangeeta Kalanidhi Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy's music which was replete with rhythm, melody and harmony. An admirer of the vainika's music, Yehudi Menuhin invited him to attend the Bath International Music Festival and perform at London, Bristol, Oxford, Cambridge and Birmingham in 1970. What an honour! It is indeed a great privilege to dedicate this issue of Shanmukha to the great vainika on the occasion of his birth centenary.

The opening piece of this issue is by the vainika himself. It is his Presidential address at the 53rd conference of The Music Academy in 1979 when he was conferred the Sangeetha Kalanidhi.

Kalyani Sharma, one of his foremost disciples pays her tributes to her guru and considers it her good fortune to have imbibed such pure music from him.

Jayashree Aravind pays a poignant tribute expressing her gratitude for all the generosity given in the form of excellent teaching. She particularly emphasizes his "paatanthara shuddham" and his method of teaching without rote-learning.

Geetha Raja speaks of his patience as a guru and his combined vocal and veena method of teaching which left an impact on a student's mind.

P. Vasanth Kumar, in his tribute to the maestro, speaks of his chaste and traditional music.

Shri. K.S.Narayanaswamy shared his thoughts on music with Kalyani Sharma when she met him in 1998. We reproduce excerpts from this interview.

S.Rugmani Gopalakrishnan, Lakshmi G.Krishnan and N.Lalitha pay tributes to their guru.

Janaki Krishnamoorthi and Janaki Swamy speak of his unique bani and the divine quality of his music.

Sunil Pranavam shares his memories of the time spent with his great guru KSN Sir.

Janaki Krishnamoorthi gives us a detailed account of the celebration of Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy's birth centenary by Mumbai musicians.

Dr. Nirmala Sundararajan pays a tribute to renowned guru Smt. T.Muktha on her birth centenary.

Shanmukha condoles the sudden passing away of the most brilliant star on the music horizon, Mandolin U.Srinivas. We reproduce here a tribute to the mandolin maestro by Dr.Vasumathi Badrinathan which had earlier been published in the column Noteworthy of the Asian Age newspaper.

Sabha Roundup and Happenings at the Vidyalaya cover some of the events that took place in the second half of 2014.

Read and enjoy the Quiz on Sangeeta & Natya.

N.Hariharan pays a fond tribute to maestro Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy or "Nedunurigar" as he is affectionately called.

Dr.Vasumathi Badrinathan pays a touching tribute to her guru par excellence Smt.T.R.Balamani.

(In order to include the centenary celebration of Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy held in Mumbai in November 2014, we are bringing out this special issue (July-Dec 2014) dedicated to him.)

சென்னை சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் 53-வது மகாநாட்டில் வினை வித்வான் ஸ்ரீ கே. எஸ். நாராயணஸ்வாம் அவர்களின் தலைமை உரை

(This was earlier published in the January 1979 issue of Shanmukha.)

இம்மகாநாட்டைத் திறந்து வைக்கும் மாண்புமிக் உபஜனாதிபதி அவர்களுக்கும். இங்கு கூடியுள்ள வித்வான்கள், விதுஷிகள் ரஸிக சிரோமணிகள் அனைவருக்கும் எனது வணக்கத்தை அன்பு கலந்து தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இந்த 53-வது மகாநாட்டிற்குத் தலைமை தாங்குவதற்கு என்னைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்த வித்வான்கள் விதுஷியர் அனைவருக்கும் சென்னை ம்யூஸிக் அகாடமி நிர்வாகஸ்தர்களுக்கும் எனது நன்றியைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொண்டு, இம்மகாநாடு சிறந்த முறையில் நடந்தேற அவர்கள் ஒவ்வொருவரும் எனக்குத் துணை புரிய வேண்டுமென்று பணிவாக கரங்குவித்து வேண்டிக்கொள்கிறேன்.

இன்று இங்கு உங்கள் எதிரில் இந்தப் பொறுப்புடன் நிற்கும்படி என்னை ஆளாக்கியவர்களும், தெய்வத்திற்கு ஸமதையாக நினைத்து நான் ஆரதித்து வருபவர்களுமான என் குருநாதர்களது பாதங்களை வணங்கி, இம்மகாநாடு மங்களகரமாக நடக்க அவர்களது ஆசியைக்கோரி பிரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தம்

ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தம், கர்நாடக கத்தம் இவைபோன்ற வார்த்தைகள். ஸங்கீத வித்வான்களைப் புகழ்ந்து பேசும்போது அடிக்கடி உபயோகப் படுகின்றன. ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தத்தின் அடிப்படை, அதன் உயர்வு இவை பற்றி சர்ச்சைகளும், வாக்கு வாதங்களும் இன்றும் நடந்து வருகின்றன. பல்லாண்டுகளாக குரு பரம்பரையாகவோ, குடும்ப பரம்பரையாகவோ உயர்ந்த முறையில் கையாளப்பட்டு ஸாதனையின் திறமையால் வளர்ந்து விளங்கும் உயர்ந்த பத்ததியை ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தமான பத்ததி என்று கூறலாம். இது லக்ஷ்யத்திற்கும் லக்ஷணத்திற்கும் முரண்பாடில்லாமல் அமைந்திருக்க வேண்டும் என்பது முக்கியம்.

ராக ஆலாபனையிலும், கீர்த்தனைகளிலும் ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தம் முதல் ஸ்தானம் வகிக்கின்றது. ராகங்களின் பாவம் ஸ்வரூபம் இவை நன்கு ஸ்பரிப்பதற்கு அடிப்படையான கமகங்களின் தொகுதிகள் வேறு எந்த நாட்டு ஸங்கீதத்திலும் இல்லாத முறையில், நமது கர்நாடக ஸங்கீத ஸம்பிரதாயத்தில், உயர்ந்த லக்ஷ்ய லக்ஷணங்களுடனும் உசிதமான கட்டுப்பாட்டுடனும் அமைந்துள்ளன. பல வகைகளாகவும், நுட்பமாகவும் அமைந்துள்ள ஸ்வர அசைவுகளும், நெடில் குறில் பொருத்தங்களுடன் ஸ்வரத் தொகுதிகளின் செயற்கைகளும், தோடி, பைரவி, கல்யாணி, சங்கராபரணம், காம்போதி போன்ற ரக்தி ராகங்களின் ஸ்வரூபத்தைத் தெளிவு படுத்த முக்கியமான அம்சங்களாக உதவுகின்றன.

ஈஸ்வரார்ப்பணம்

ஆரம்பம் தொட்டே நமது ஸங்கீதம் கடவுளுக்கு அர்ப்பணமாகச் செய்யும் வழி முறையில் தான் வந்துள்ளது. பாட்டு ஈஸ்வரார்ப்பணமாக இருந்ததென்று புகழ்வதை நாம் நன்கறிவோம். எது செய்தாலும் ஈஸ்வரார்ப்பணமாகச் செய்வது பெரியோர்களது வழக்கம்.

ஸங்கீதத்தை ஈஸ்வரார்ப்பணம் செய்யும்போது, அமைதியும், விச்ராந்தியும், நிம்மதியான சூழ்நிலையும் தேவை. ராகாலாபனைக்கு வார்த்தைகள் இல்லாததால் அர்த்த பாவத்திற்கு வழியில்லை. நாத கத்தமும், மகாவித்வான்களின் இன்னிசையை ஏராளமாகக் கேட்டுப் பழக்கப்பட்ட லக்ஷ்ய ஞானமும் மிகவும் அவசியம். ஸ்வாநுபூதி ஏற்பட வேண்டும். வித்வானுக்கு ஸ்வாநுபூதி ஏற்படும் போது இசையை அனுபவிக்கும் ஒவ்வொரு ரஸிகரும் தம்மை மறந்து ரஸிப்பார். தாக்ஷிண்யத்திற்குக் கைதட்டி (அப்ளாஸ் கொடுத்து) ரஸிப்பதும் தன்னை மறந்து ஆஹாகாரத்துடன் ரஸிப்பதும் ஒன்றாகாதே!

ஸ்வரங்களின் அளவு

ஷட்ஜ பஞ்சமங்கள் மட்டிலும் கருதியுடன் இணைந்தால் போதாது. ராகங்களுக்கு ஏற்றபடி மற்றைய ஸ்வரங்களின் துல்யமான அளவுடன் அமைந்த அசைவுகள் கருதியில் இணைந்து அதை ஒட்டி ஷட்ஜ பஞ்சமங்கள் சேர்ந்து இணையும் போது அதற்குத் தனிச் சிறப்பு ஏற்படுகிறது. "இன்று வித்வான் பாடிய ஸாவேரி ஈச்வரார்ப்பணம். மேல் ஷட்ஜத்திலேயே ஸாவேரி அப்படியே தாண்டவமாடியது" என்று லக்ஷ்யத்தில் மூலக்கிய ரஸிகர்கள் கூறுவதுண்டு. ஸாவேரிக்கென்று தனி ஷட்ஜம் கிடையாது. ஸாவேரி ராகத்திற்குப் பொருத்தமான ஸஞ்சாரங்கள் துல்யமான ஸ்தானங்களில் அமைந்து அதை ஒட்டி ஷட்ஜத்தில் லயிக்கும் போது இந்த உணர்ச்சி ஏற்படுகிறது. ஒவ்வொரு ராகத்திலும் இது அனுபவமாகும்.

கருதிகள்

கிருதிகளைப் பொறுத்தவரை, ஸாஹித்ய பாவத்துடன் ராகபாவத்தின் பொருத்தம். ஸங்கதிகளின் கிரமமான செயற்கைப் பொருத்தம், ராகலக்ஷண ஸஞ்சாரக் கட்டுப்பாடு இவைகளுடன் கீர்த்தனைகளைக் கையாளுவது உயர்ந்த ஸம்பிரதாய முறையாகும். ஸங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகள் என்று நாம் போற்றி வணங்குகிற வாக்கேயகாரர்களது கிருதிகளின் அர்த்தபாவத்தையும், ஸங்கீத மேன்மையையும் அறிந்து, அதில் லயித்து, ஈச்வரார்ப்பணமாகப் பாடும் திறமை அடைவதற்குப் புண்ணியம் செய்திருக்க வேண்டும் என்று ஜகத்குரு ஸ்ரீ சங்கராசாரியார் அவர்கள் உபதேச மொழிகளில் கூறக் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். ஸங்கீத திரிமூர்த்திகளின் கிருதிகளை முறையாகப் பயின்று ஸாதனை செய்யும் வித்வான்களும், விதுஷிகளும் மாணவ மாணவியரும் உள்ளவரை நமது ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு லக்ஷ்ய லக்ஷண முறையிலும், ஸம்பிரதாயத்தின் மேன்மையிலும் ஒரு குறையும் ஏற்படாது என்பது எனது நம்பிக்கை.

வீணையின் மேன்மை

தெய்வீக வாத்தியமான வீணையின் உயர்வைப் பற்றி வேதங்கள் கோஷிப்பதாக வேத அப்யயனம் செய்த மகாபண்டிதர்கள் கூறக் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். வீணை முதலில் எந்த உருவிலிருந்தது, இப்போது அமைந்திருக்கும் உரு எக்காலத்தில் யாரால் அமைக்கப் பெற்றது என்பவைவெல்லாம் ஆராய்ச்சி முறையில் சர்ச்சைக்குரிய விஷயங்கள். இன்று கையாளும் வீணையின் அமைப்பை நாம் அறிவோம். இதன் தெய்வீகமான நாதத்தையும் அனுபவித்து மகிழ்கிறோம்.

முதன் முதலில் வீணையை அப்யாஸம் பண்ணும்போதே நமது கர்நாடக ஸங்கீத முறையில் அமைந்துள்ள ரக்தி ராகங்களின் ஸ்வரூபமும், பாவமும், வீணையில் அமைந்துள்ள 12 ஸ்வரஸ்தான மெட்டுக்களிலிருந்து மட்டுமே த்வனிக்காது என்ற உண்மையை அந்த வாத்தியம் நிரூபித்துக் காட்டுகின்றது. ஒவ்வொரு ராகமும் பாவ பூர்த்தியுடன் த்வனிப்பதற்கு, ஸ்வரங்களை ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுடனும், வளைவு குழைவுகளுடனும், எந்த அளவில் வாசிக்க வேண்டும் என்பதை இந்த வாத்தியமே அதை முறையாக ஆராதிப்பவர்களுக்குச் சிறந்த குரு நாதரைப் போல் போதிக்கின்றது.

'கீதானுகதம் வாத்தியம்' என்ற முறை தான் நமது ஸங்கீத பத்ததியில் கையாளப்பட்டு வருகின்றது. வைணிகர்களையும், பாடகர்களையும் புகழும்போது வீணைக்கு உவமையாகப் பாட்டையும், பாட்டிற்கு உவமையாக வீணையையும் காட்டிப் புகழ்வதுண்டு. பாட்டும் வீணையும் ஒன்றிற்கு ஒன்று துணையாகவே அமைந்துள்ளன. பாடகர்கள் வீணையை ஓரளவு அப்யாஸம் செய்ய வேண்டுமென்பதை ஸ்ரீ முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் அவர்களும் அவருடைய முன்னோர்களும் நிரூபித்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

தானம்

தானம் என்பது முக்கியமான அம்சமாகும். பாடுபவர்களும், வீணை வாசிப்பவர்களும், நல்ல முறையில் தானம் அப்யாஸம் செய்வது, கற்பனையாக ராகம் பாடுவதற்கும், நெரவல் மத்யம் காலம் பாடுவதற்கும் மிகவும் பயன் தருவதாகும். ஸம்பிரதாய கத்த மாகவும் ஸ்நாதமாகவும் தானம் வாசிக்கும் திறமையுள்ள வீணை வித்வான்கள் வாசிப்பதை சரியாகக் கேட்காமலோ, கேட்டும் புரிந்து கொள்ள முடியாமலோ சிலர் வீணையில் தானம் வாசிப்பதைக் குறை கூறுகிறார்கள். வீணையில் தானம் வாசிக்கும்போது தாளத்தந்திகளை உபயோகப் படுத்த வேண்டிய முறையை, வியக்கத்தக்க ரீதியில் நமது முன்னோர்கள் வகுத்துள்ளார்கள். தான ஸம்பிரதாயத்தில், வீணையில் மீட்டு விழாமல் ஒலிக்கும் ஸ்வரங்களில் தாளத்தந்திகள் மிருதுவாக ஒலிக்க வேண்டும். மீட்டு விழாத ஸ்வரங்கள் தாளத்தந்திகளின் த்வனியில் முழுகி மறைந்து விடக்கூடாது. அந்த ஸ்வரங்களை போஷிப்பது போல தாளத்தந்திகளை மிருதுவாக உபயோகப்படுத்த வேண்டும். ராக பாவத்துடன் லக்ஷணத்திற்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டு ஸ்வரத் தொகுதிகளை தான வரிசைக் கிரமத்தில் அமைத்து காலப்ரமாண கத்தத்துடன் தானம் வாசிப்பது தான் சிறந்த முறை ஜண்டை ஸ்வரங்களின் முறையான அமைப்பு. ராகபாவம் பொருந்திய சிறு ஸ்வரத்தொகுதிகளின் தான ரீதியான செயற்கைக் கோர்வை, இவை, தான பத்ததியின் முக்கிய அம்சங்கள். இந்த ஸ்வரத் தொகுதிகளை கருதி சுத்தமாக வாசித்து, தொடர்ந்து பஞ்சமத்திலோ, ஷட்ஜத்திலோ லயிக்கும் படி செய்து தாளத்தந்திகளின் நாத உதவியுடன் ஷட்ஜத்தையோ பஞ்சமத்தையோ மட்டும் தான ரீதியில் மீட்டும் போது, முன்னதாக வாசித்த ராகம், ஷட்ஜத்திலும் பஞ்சமத்திலுமே ஒலிப்பதை உணரலாம். ஸாவேரி, பேகடை, தோடி போன்ற ராகங்கள், ஷட்ஜத்திலும் பஞ்சமத்திலுமே த்வனிக்கின்றதே என்று ரஸிகர்கள் கூறுவதின் பொருள் இது தான்.

ஸங்கீதம் இனிமையையும் ஸௌக்யத்தையும் அடிப் படையாகக் கொண்டது. வீணை இவற்றின் சிகரம். லோகமாதாவான அம்பாளுக்குப் பூஜை செய்து, புஷ்பங்களால் அர்ச்சனை செய்யும்போது பக்தி ச்ரத்தையுடன் புஷ்பங்களை மிருதுவாக ஸமர்ப்பிக்கின்றோம். கல்லால் அடிப்பது போல் புஷ்பங்களால் அம்பாளை அடிப்பதில்லை. ஸங்கீத தேவதையை ஆராதிக்கும் போது (அதிலும் வீணை வழி) ஸ்வர புஷ்பங்களை மிருதுவாகக் கையாண்டு ஸமர்ப்பணம் செய்வது உத்தமமான முறை.

குருகுலவாசம்

கலாசாலைப் பயிற்சி பிரசாரத்திற்கு வந்துள்ள இக்காலத்தில் குருகுலவாஸ முறை சுலபமானதல்ல. குருகுலவாஸ முறை சிறந்தது தான். ஆனால் அது காரணமாக கலாசாலை முறையைக் குறை கூறுவது ஸரியல்ல என்பது என் அபிப்பிராயம்.

கொடைவள்ளல் ராஜா ஸர் அண்ணாமலைச் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் முதன் முதலில் 1929-ம் ஆண்டு ஸங்கீதக் கலாசாலையை அண்ணாமலை நகரில் நிறுவினார்கள். அதில் முதலாகப் பயிற்சி பெற்ற மாணவன் நான் என்பதை மகிழ்ச்சியுடனும், பெருமையுடனும் கூறிக்கொள்கிறேன். தலைவர்களாகவும், பேராசிரியர்களாகவும் இங்கு பணியாற்றிய எனது குருநாதர்கள் இக்கலாசாலையை குரு குலமாகவே திகழச் செய்தார்கள். இங்கு பயிற்சி பெற்ற பலர் மேடையிலும், ஆசிரியர் பதவியிலும் சிறந்து விளங்கினார்கள். இன்றும் விளங்குகிறார்கள்.

மேன்மை தங்கிய திருவிதாங்கூர் மகாராணி ஸேது பார்வதி பாய் அவர்களும் ஸ்ரீ சித்திரை திருநாள் மகாராஜா அவர்களும் ஸங்கீதத்திற்குப் பேராதரவு அளித்து ஸ்ரீ ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் ஸங்கீதக் கலாசாலையை திருவனந்த புரத்தில் அமைத்தார்கள். காயகசிகாமணி டாக்டர் முத்தையா பாகவதர் அவர்களும், ராஜ்ய ஸேவாநிரத டாக்டர் செம்மங்குடி ஸ்ரீனிவாஸய்யர் அவர்களும் இக் கலாசாலையை குருகுலமாகவே வளர்த்து உலகப் புகழ் அடையச் செய்தார்கள். டாக்டர் ஸ்ரீனிவாஸய்யர் அவர்கள் தலைமையில் இருபத்து நான்கு ஆண்டுகள் இக்கலாசாலையில் ஸங்கீத தேவதைக்கு ஸேவை புரியும் பாக்கியம் எனக்குக் கிடைத்தது. கலாசாலைப் பயிற்சி இந்த முறையில் வளர்ந்து வரும் வரை நமது ஸங்கீதத்தின் மேன்மைக்கும் ஸம்பிரதாய கத்த வளர்ச்சிக்கும் எந்த வித ஆபத்தும் வராது என்பது எனது நம்பிக்கை.

ஸ்வரம் பாடுவதும் வாசிப்பதும்

பண்டைக்காலத்தில் ராகாலாபனை, கிருதி, நிரவல், தாளம், பல்லவி இவைதான் பிரதானமாகப் பழக்கத்திலிருந்தன என்று என் குருநாதர்களும் அவர்கள் காலத்திலிருந்த மற்ற வித்வான்களும் கூறுவார்கள். எந்தக் காலத்திலிருந்து ஸ்வரம் பாடுவது அதிகப்படியாக பிரசாரத்திற்கு வந்தது, இக்காலத்தில் கச்சேரிகளில் ஸ்வரம் பாடும், அல்லது வாசிக்கும் அளவு அவசியம் தானா. இது ராக ஆலாபனை முறையை எந்த அளவில் பாதிக்கின்றது என்பன போன்றவைகளை வித்வான்கள் வித்தியாஸ மனப்பான்மையில்லாமல் சர்ச்சை செய்ய வேண்டும். அதற்கு "ம்யூஸிக் அகாடமி" தான் தகுந்த ஸ்தாபனம். அதற்கு இவர்களே வழி செய்ய வேண்டும்.

மத்யமகால ஸ்வரம் பாடுவதற்கு ஒவ்வோரு ஸ்வரஸ்தானத்திற்கும் எழுத்தைச்சொல்லியாக வேண்டியிருப்பதால், ராக பாவத்திற்கும் ரக்திக்கும் அடிப்படையான வளைவு குழைவுகளுக்கு இடமில்லாமல் போய் விடுகிறது. இதனால் தான் ராகாலாபனை செய்யும்போது ஏற்படும் ரக்தியும் ஸுகபாவமும் மத்யமகால ஸ்வரம் பாடும் போது ஏற்படுவதில்லை. செளககால ஸ்வரத்தை ஓரளவு போஷிக்க செய்துவிடலாம். ஐதிகளை ஸ்வரங்களாக அமைத்துப் பாடும்போது ராகரக்தியும் ஸஞ்சாரக்ரமங்களும் பாதிக்கப்படுகின்றன. வியவஹாரம் என்ற பெயரில் ஸ்வரங்களை அடித்துக் கையாளும் போது, அவை ஸ்தானங்களிலிருந்து விலகி, ஸ்வரத்திற்கும் ஸ்தானத்திற்கும் ஸம்பந்தமில்லாத நிலை ஏற்பட்டு விடுகிறது. ராகபாவமும் ரக்தியும் கெடாமல் ஸ்வரம் பாடும் முறையைக் கையரளவது தான் உசிதம் என்பது என் அபிப்பிராயம்.

நமது ம்யூசிக் அகாடமி ஸ்தாபனம் ஸங்கீதத்திற்குச் செய்து வரும் உயர்ந்த ஸேவையைப் பற்றி நாம் அறிவோம். வித்வான்களின் ஒத்துழைப்பு, ரஸிகப் பெருமக்களின் ஆதரவு, நிர்வாகிகளின் திறமை எல்லாம் துணை நின்று இந்த ஸ்தாபனம் ஸங்கீதத்திற்குச் செய்து வரும் ஒப்பற்ற ஸேவையை இன்னும் பன்மடங்கு உயர்வு பெறச் செய்யும் என்பதில் ஐயம் இல்லை.

இசை ஞானி கே. எஸ். நாராயணஸ்வாமி

Kalyani Sharma

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உன்னதமான நமது கர்னாடக ஸங்கீதத்தை ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்தத்துடன் பேணிக்காத்து, அதுவும் வீணை வாசிப்பின் மூலம் ஸங்கீத சாஸ்திரத்தையே கரைகண்ட ஒரு ஞானியின் தெளிவுடன், வீணை என்றாவ் எப்படி இருக்க வேண்டும், அந்த புனிதமான வாத்தியத்தை எப்படி கையாள வேண்டுமென்பதற்கு ஒரு எடுத்துக்காட்டாக ஸங்கீத உலகில் திகழ்ந்த என் குருநாதர், ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி ஸ்ரீ கே. எஸ். நாராயணஸ்வாமி அவர்களின் 100-வது ஆண்டு நடந்துகொண்டிருக்கும் இச்சமயத்தில் நான் இந்தக் கட்டுரையை எனது குருநாதர் அவர்கள் பாதத்தில் ஸமர்ப்பிக்கிறேன்.

கிடைப்பதற்கரிய ஸங்கீத சாஸ்திரத்தின் பல நுட்பங்கள், ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்த ஸங்கீதத்தின் சிறப்பு, நம் முன்னோர்களின் பொக்கிஷங்களான நல்ல பாடாந்திர முறையில் உள்ள க்ருதிகள், அவரிடமிருந்தே கற்க, புரிந்து கொள்ள கிடைத்தது எனது பெரிய பாக்யம்.

கிட்டத்தட்ட எனது 14-வது வயதிலிருந்து நான் அவரிடம் வீணை கற்க ஆரம்பித்து தொடர்ந்து கடைசிவரை அவரிடமிருந்து கற்றுத் தெரிந்து கொண்ட பல விஷயங்களை வாசகர்களுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ள விரும்புகிறேன்.

ஒரு தாயின் பரிவுடனும், தந்தையின் பொறுப்புடனும், குருவின் கண்டிப்புடனும், தெய்வத்தின் ஆசீர்வாதத்துடனும் அவர் என்னை தன் குடும்பத்தின் ஒரு அங்கத்தினராகவே பாவித்துப் பழகினதாவ் எனக்குக் கிடைத்த பல அரிய பெரிய விஷயங்களை இக்கட்டுரையின் மூலம் உலகிற்கு தெரிவிப்பதை அவருக்கு நான் செலுத்தும் அஞ்சலியாகக் கருதுகிறேன்.

ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி கே.எஸ். நாராயணஸ்வாமி அவர்கள் பாலக்காட்டிற்கு அருகில் "கொடுவாயூர்" என்ற இடத்தில் 27.09.1914 ஸரஸ்வதி பூஜை அன்று

பூராட நகரத்திரத்தில் ஒரு ஸங்கீத குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்தார். தாயார் ஸ்ரீமதி நாராயணியம்மாள். தகப்பனார் கொடுவாயூர் ஸ்ரீ சிவராமய்யர். நாராயணி அம்மாள் அவர்கள் நல்ல ஸங்கீத ஞானமுள்ளவர். நன்றாக வீணையும் வாசிப்பாராம்.

சிறுவன் நாராயணஸ்வாமி அவர்கள் தனது 7-வது வயதிலேயே தனது தாயார் தமையனார் கே.எஸ். கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி அவர்களிடம் ஸங்கீதம் பயில ஆரம்பித்தார். ஏழாவது வயதிலேயே அவரது ஸ்வர ஞானத்தை மெச்சி ஜமீன்தாரின் மகன் குஞ்சிராம மேனன் என்பவர் தனது கையிலிருந்த நீவக்கல் (ஸபையர்) மோதிரத்தைப் பரிசளித்திருக்கிறார். தனது 14-ம் வயதில் சிதம்பரம் அண்ணாமலை பல்கலை கழகத்தில் மாணவனாகச் சேர்ந்து முறையாக ஸங்கீதம் பயின்று “ஸங்கீதபூஷணம்” பட்டம் பெற்றார்.

அப்பொழுது அண்ணாமலை கலாசாலையின் முதல்வராக டைகர் வரதாசாரியார் அவர்கள் பணியாற்றி வந்தார். அவரது தலைமையின் கீழ் மஹாவித்வான் ஸ்ரீ பொன்னய்யா பிள்ளை (பிரபல “தஞ்சை நால்வரின்” வம்சத்திலுதித்தவர்), வீணை வித்வான் தேசமங்கலம் ஸ்ரீஸுப்ரமணியய்யர் ஆகியோர் ஆசிரியர்களாக பணியாற்றி வந்தார்கள்.

எனது குருநாதர் ஆரம்பத்தில் முக்கிய பாடமாக எடுத்துக் கற்றுக் கொண்டது வாய்ப்பாட்டுத்தான். வீணையும், மிருதங்கமும் துணைப் பாடங்களாக எடுத்துக் கொண்டார். முதலில் மஹா வித்வான் ஸபேசய்யர் அவர்களிடம் நிறையப் பாட்டு கற்றுக் கொண்டிருக்கிறார். பொன்னய்யா பிள்ளையிடம் வாய்ப்பாட்டும், மிருதங்கமும் கற்றுக் கொண்டார். மிருதங்கத்தில் கச்சேரிகளுக்கு பக்க மேளம் வாசிக்கும் அளவிற்கு தேர்ச்சியும் பெற்றிருந்தார். வீணை வித்வான் தேசமங்கலம் ஸுப்ரமணியய்யரிடம் வீணை கற்றுக் கொண்டார். பிற்காலத்தில் வீணையையே ப்ரதான பாடமாக எடுக்க வேண்டிய சந்தர்ப்பம் வந்ததால் ஸுப்ரமணியய்யரிடம் தொடர்ந்து கற்று “ஸங்கீதபூஷணம்” பட்டம் பெற்றார்.

தன் வாய்ப்பாட்டு ஞானத்துடன் குரு தேச மங்கலம் ஸுப்ரமணியய்யரின் ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்தமான “காயகி” வீணை பாணியைக் கடைபிடித்து தன் உழைப்பாலும், ஆராய்ச்சியாலும் கொஞ்சமும் வழுவாத ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்தமான ஸங்கீத பாணியை உறுதியாக கடைபிடித்து பிற்காலத்தில் “கே. எஸ். நாராயணஸ்வாமி பாணி” என்ற ஒரு வழி முறையை உருவாக்கி நாடெங்கும் தன் பாணியை பரிமளிக்கச் செய்தார்.

ஸரஸ்வதி வீணை, அந்தப் புனிதமான வாத்யத்தின் ஸான்னித்யம் கெடாமல் எப்படி கையாள வேண்டுமென்று அமைதியுடன் ஆராய்ந்து வீணையையே தனது ஆசானாக மதித்து அதில் வயித்து வீணை வாசிப்பு என்றால் இப்படித்தான் இருக்க வேண்டும் என்பதை பெரிய பெரிய வித்வான்களிலிருந்து சிறு குழந்தைகள் வரை புரிந்து ரஸிக்கும்படி வாசித்துக் காட்டித் தன் புகழை இன்னும் ஒரு படி உயர்த்திக் கொண்டவர். அதற்கு இடைஞ்சலாக இருந்த எந்த இடையூறுகளையும் பொருட்படுத்தாது அவர் அமைதியாக, பொறுமையாக தனது கொள்கையிலேயே வழுவாது கடைசிவரை இருந்தார்.

எனது குருநாதர் அலர்களுக்கு குரு பக்தி ரொம்ப அதிகம். எந்தப் பாட்டையோ, ராகத்தையோ பற்றிப் பேசும்போதோ, லாசிக்கும்போதோ அவர் தன் குருநாதர் ஸபேசய்யர், பொன்னய்யா பிள்ளை, ஸுப்ரமணியய்யர் இலர்களைப் பற்றிக் குறிப்பிடாமல் இருக்க மாட்டார். தன் குருநாதர்கள் எப்படி அழகாக விளக்கிச் சொல்லுவார்கள், அவர்களெல்லாம் ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்தமான ஸங்கீதத்திற்காக எல்லாறு உழைத்திருக்கிறார்கள் என்பதை ஆணித்தனமாகவிலரிப்பார்.

ஸபேசய்யர், பொன்னய்யா பிள்ளை, தேசமங்கலம் ஸுப்ரமணியய்யர் இலர்கள் மூவரும் எப்பொழுதும் சேர்ந்து இருந்து கொண்டு ஒவ்வொரு க்ருதியையும், ராகத்தையும் ஆராய்ந்து வீணை வாசிப்பு என்றால் பாடுகிற மாதிரியே தான் இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று மற்ற இருவர் பாட ஸுப்ரமணியய்யர் வீணை வாசிப்பாராம்.

“ஸங்கீத பூஷணம்” பட்டம் பெற்றவுடனேயே அக்கலாசாலையில் ஆசிரியராக 9 வருடங்கள் பணியாற்றினார் என் குருநாதர். அந்த சமயத்தில் ஸ்ரீ பொன்னய்யா பிள்ளை அவர்களுக்கு தமிழ் க்ருதிகளை (நீலகண்ட சிலன், கோபால் க்ருஷ்ணபாரதி, திருப்புகழ்) ஸ்ரீலரதாளக் குறிப்புடன் ஸ்வரப்படுத்தி அச்சிட உதவியாக இருந்து, அக்கிருதிகள் வெளிலரக் காரணமாகவும் இருந்தார்.

இதன் பிறகு திருவிதாங்கூர் மஹாராணி ஸேதுபார்லதிபாய் அலர்களின் அழைப்பின் பேரில் திருவனந்தபுரம் “ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் ஸங்கீத கலாசாலை” யில் முதல்வர் ஸ்ரீ செம்மங்குடி ஸ்ரீநிவாஸய்யர் கீழ் ஆசிரியராக பதவி ஏற்றார். கடைசியில் அக்கலாசாலையின் முதல்வராகவே பணியாற்றி ஓய்வு பெற்றார். இந்த இடைக் காலத்தில் அவர் மஹாராணி ஸேதுபார்லதிபாய் அலர்களின் ஆதரவுடனும், ஸ்ரீசெம்மங்குடி ஸார் அலர்களின் ஒத்துழைப்புடனும் ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு ஆற்றின தொண்டுகள் ஏராளம்.

ஸம்பிரதாயமான ஸங்கீதத்தைக் கற்றுக் கொடுத்து நிறைய மாணவ மாணவிகளைத் தயார் செய்தார். அரண்மனையில் ஆஸ்தான வித்லானாக இருந்து மஹாராணி குடும்பத்தாருக்கு ஆசானாகவும் இருந்து வீணை கற்றுக் கொடுத்தார். மஹாராஜா ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் க்ருதிகளை சேகரித்து, ஸ்ரீலரதாளக் குறிப்புடன் லெளியிடும் பெரிய பொறுப்பை ஏற்று ஸ்ரீ செம்மங்குடி ஸாருக்கு உதவியாக இருந்து, அதை நல்ல முறையில் ப்ராபல்யம் அடையக் காரணமாக இருந்தார்.

அதன்பிறகு 1970 லிருந்து “பம்பாய் ஷண்முகானந்த ஸங்கீத வித்யாலயா” வின் முதல்லராக பணியேற்றார். 15 வருடங்கள் இல்வித்யாலயாவின் முதல்லராக இருந்து அதை ஒரு உன்னதமான நிலைக்கு கொண்டு லந்தார். ஆரம்பத்தில் லெறும் லாய்ப்பாட்டு மாத்திரமாக இருந்த வித்யாலயாவில் வீணை, லயலின், மிருதங்கம், ஸிதார், தபலா என்று பல பிரிவுகளாக விரிவுபடுத்தி ஸபா கமிட்டி அங்கத்தினர்களின் ஒத்துழைப்புடனும்,

ஆதரவுடனும், அந்த ஸங்கீத கலாசாவையை, ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் ஸங்கீத கலாசாவை, கர்னாடிக் காலேஜ் இவைகளுக்கு இணையாக தரத்தில் உயர்த்தி நவ்வ முறையில் நடத்தி வந்தார். அவரது தலைமையின் கீழ் நிறைய ஆசிரியர்கள் பணியாற்றி வந்தார்கள். அதிவ் நானும் ஒருவர். 500 க்கும் மேல் மாணவ மாணவிகள் அச்சமயம் அங்கு படித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தார்கள். அப்பள்ளிக்கு ஸங்கீத டிப்ளோமா (KVC) விந்ரு பம்பாய் பல்கலை கழகத்தின் அங்கீகாரம் கிடைத்ததற்கு “இவரது தலைமையும் ஒரு முக்கிய காரணம்” என்பது டாக்டர் நாராயண மேனன் அவர்களின் கருத்து.

பவமுறை அயல் நாடுகளுக்கு பல்வேறு இசை நிறுவனங்களின் அழைப்பை ஏற்றுச் சென்று கர்னாடக இசையின் சிறப்பை உணர்த்தியவர் என குருநாதர். பாரதத்தின் மாநில, தேசிய விருதுகள் பவவற்றைப் பெற்றவர்.

கேரளா விருது	1962
தமிழ்நாடு விருது	1968
மத்திய ஸங்கீத நாடக அகாதமி விருது	1968
பத்மபூஷண்	1977
சென்னை மியூசிக் அகாதமியின் “ஸங்கீத கவாநிதி”	1980
ஸ்வாதி புரஸ்கார், “ஸ்வாதிரத்னா”	1999

எனக்கு அவரிடம் 23 வருடங்கள் வீணை கற்றுக் கொள்ளும் வாய்ப்பு கிடைத்தது என பாக்கியம். முதல் நான் ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் கலாசாவை மாணவியாக இருந்தபோது 8 வருடங்களும், பின் அவர் பம்பாய் ஷண்முகானந்தா ஸங்கீத வித்யாலயாவின் முதல்வராக பணியாற்றிய 15 வருடங்களும், அவரின் கீழ் ஆசிரியராகப் பணியாற்றியது மட்டுமல்லாமல், மாணவியாக பவ அரிய பெரிய விஷயங்களைக் கற்றறிந்தேன்.

இது தவிர அவர் வாழ்ந்து இருந்த கடைசி காலம் வரை அவரது ஆலோசனையும், ஆதரவும் எனக்கு பரிபூர்ணமாக இருந்தது என்று சொன்னால் மிகையாகாது.

ஆத்மார்த்த சாதனை :

இசையை அப்யஸிப்பது என்பது ஸம்பிரதாயமான, உண்மையான ஸங்கீதத்தை நாடிச் செல்வதற்கு ஒப்பானது என்பது அவர் கருத்து. முன்பே கூறியதுபோல் தனது பாரம்பர்யம், நம் முன்னோர்கள் வகுத்துக் கொடுத்த வழி, தன் குருமார்கள் கடைபிடித்து காட்டிக் கொடுத்த ஸம்பிரதாய கத்தமான ஸங்கீதம், அதைத் தொடர்ந்து அவர் வீணையின் பல நுட்பங்களையும் நன்றாக, அமைதியாக ஆராய்ந்து, அறிந்தவைகளை மிக நேர்த்தியாக அதிசயிக்கத்தக்க முறையில் விளக்கி, வாசித்தும் காட்டுலார். நம்மிடமும் அந்த அளவிற்கு எதிர்பார்ப்பார்.

மிக்க பொறுமையுடன் சொல்லிக் கொடுப்பார். அவர் வாசித்துக் காட்டியதை நாம் நன்கு புரிந்து கொண்டு வாசிக்கும் வரை நம்முடன்

திரும்பத்திரும்ப அவரும் கூடவே வாசிப்பார். கீர்த்தனைகளை நாம் அதன் ராகபாவம், அழகு கெடாமல் ஸம்பிரதாய சுத்தமாக வாசிக்கிறோமா என்பதில் ரொம்ப கருத்தாக இருப்பார். மேலும் நாம் அதன் ஸாஹித்யம், பதப் பிரிப்பு இவைகளைப் புரிந்து கொண்டு வாசிக்க வேண்டுமென்று பாடிக்காட்டி, அர்த்தம் சொல்லி வாசித்துக் காட்டுவார். தவிர, அவர் வாய்ப்பாட்டு, வீணை இரண்டும் முறையாகக் கற்று, தெலுங்கு, ஸம்ஸ்கிருத பாஷா ஞானமும் உடையவராக இருந்ததால், அவர் வீணை வாசிக்கும்போது தத்ருபமாகப் பாடுவது போலவே இருக்கம். வெறும் கீர்த்தனையை இப்படி வாசித்தாலே போதுமே, அதில் எல்லாமே அடங்கியிருக்கிறதே என்பார். வீணைப் பாடாந்திரத்தையும் வாய்ப்பாட்டில் பாடி மெருகு படுத்திக் கொள் என்று என்னிடம் அடிக்கடி சொல்லுவார். அவ்வளவு உயர்ந்த பாடாந்திரம் அவருடையது.

தவிர அந்தந்த ராகங்களின் கமகப்ரயோகங்களைத் துல்லியமாக வீணையில் வாசித்துக் காட்டி (க்ரஹ, ந்யாஸ, அனுஸ்வரத்துடன்) தெளிவு படுத்துவார். ஒரு ராகம் வாசிக்கும்போது மற்ற ராகங்களின் சாயை துளிக்கூட வராமல் நாம் ஜாக்கிரதையாகப் பாடவேண்டும், வாசிக்க வேண்டும் என்று வலியுறுத்துவார். அப்படிப்பட்ட ராகங்களை எப்படிக் கையாள வேண்டும் என்பதை ரொம்ப அழகாக, ஸந்தேகத்திற்கு இடமில்லாமல் வாசித்துக் காட்டுவார்.

கச்சேரிகளில் ரஸிகர்களுக்காகவோ, கூட்டத்திற்காகவோ வாசிக்க மாட்டார். அவர் ஆத்மார்த்தமாகத் தனக்காகவே லயித்து வாசித்து ரஸிகர்களையும் தன்னுடன் லயிக்க வைப்பார். அவருடைய வாசிப்பின் உயர்ந்த அம்சம் என்னவென்றால் பாட்டின் வாசிப்பிலேயே ராகத்தின் உருவத்தை உணரலாம். மும்மூர்த்திகளின் க்ருதிகளை அதுவும் சவுக்க கால க்ருதிகளை அவர் வாசித்துக் கேட்கும்போது, உதாரணமாக “மீனாக்ஷிமே முதம்தேஹி” என்ற முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதரின் பூர்விகல்யாணி க்ருதியை அவர் அழகாக ராகபாவத்துடன், ஸாஹித்ய அர்த்த பாவத்துடன் அவரே லயித்து வாசித்துக் கேட்கும்போது, நமக்கு அவர் அந்த ராகத்தில் விரிவாக ஸஞ்சாரம் செய்து, நிரவல் பண்ணின மாதிரி ஒருநிறைவு தோன்றும்.

பழகும்பல்யம்

ரொம்ப கண்ணியமாகவும், அடக்கத்துடனும் அன்புடனும் பழகுவார். வீணை மாமா, வீணை ஸார், வீணை வித்வான் நாராயணஸ்வாமி என்று பலரும் அவரை அன்புடன் அழைத்துப் பழகுவதை நான் பலசந்தர்ப்பங்களில் கண்டிருக்கிறேன். வித்வான்களுக்கிடையில் அவருக்கு நல்ல மதிப்பும், கௌரவமும் இருந்ததை நான் அநேக ஸந்தர்ப்பங்களில் நேரில் கண்டிருக்கிறேன். ஸங்கீத விஷயமாக எதைப் பற்றியும், எப்பொழுது கேட்டாலும் அவர் அமைதியாக அழகாக விளக்கங்களுடன் தனது ஆராய்ச்சி நுட்பத்துடன், ஆதாரத்துடன் விளக்கம் சொல்லுவார். விளக்கங்கள் தரும்போது உவமானத்துடன் ரொம்ப அழகாக நம் மனதில் பதியும்படிச் சொல்லுவார். அவர் சிந்தனை ஸங்கீதம் என்றாலே தெய்வீகம், புனிதம்,

ஸான்னித்யம் என்பதால் அவரது உவமானமும் அதற்கிணையாகவே இருக்கும்.

ஓர் உதாரணம் :

ஒரு சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் ஒரு பேட்டியின்போது கேட்டது ; இப்பொழுது எல்லோரும் வீணைக்கு “காண்டாக்ட் மைக்” வைத்துக் கொள்கிறார்களே !! அது குறித்து உங்கள் அபிப்பிராயம் என்ன ? ” கே.எஸ்.என். சிறிது நேர அமைதிக்குப் பிறகு அடக்கமாக”, என் வரையிலும் அது அவசியம் என்று தோன்றவில்லை. வீணையின் த்வனியே இன்பமாக மனதைத் தொடும்படி எவ்வளவு இனிமையாக இருக்கிறது. அதை அப்படியே புனிதமாக வாசித்து மற்றவர்களையும் அதை ரசித்து ஆனந்திக்குமாறு செய்யலாமே. குழந்தையின் மழலைச் சொல் கேட்க ரொம்ப இனிமையாக இருக்கும். மழலைச் சொல்லை இயற்கையாகவே ரசித்து அனுபவிப்பதை விட்டு ‘மைக்’ வைத்து ரசித்தால் எப்படி என்றார் ! தொடர்ந்து நாம் வீணை வாசிக்கும்போது ஒவ்வொரு ஸ்வரத்தையும் ஒவ்வொரு புஷ்பமாக நினைத்து அந்தந்த ராக தேவதையை மருதுவாக புஷ்பத்தால் அர்ச்சிக்கிற மாதிரி பாவித்து வாசிக்க வேண்டும். அதைவிட்டு விட்டு கல்லால் அடிக்கிற மாதிரி அர்ச்சித்தால் (வாசித்தால்)....., என்றார்.

எல்லா ஸங்கீதத்தையும் ரசிப்பார். அவர் வாழ்ந்திருந்த ஸமயம் இருந்த எல்லா பெரிய வித்வான்களிடமும் ஒரு மதிப்பு. அதுவும் செம்மங்குடி ஸ்ரீனிவாஸய்யரிடம் ஒரு அளவிலா பக்தி, மதிப்பு அவருக்கு உண்டு. எல்லா பெரிய வித்வான்களுடையவும் பாட்டோ, வாத்யமோ அதை ரசித்து அழகாக விளக்குவார். அதைப்போல சிறிய தலைமுறைகளையும் நன்கு ஆதரிப்பார். மேற்கத்திய ஸங்கீதம், வடநாட்டு ஸங்கீதம் இரண்டிலுமே அவருக்கு ஈடுபாடு அதிகம். நிறைய ரசித்துக் கேட்பார். அதிலுள்ள நல்ல அம்சங்களை பாராட்டத் தவறமாட்டார்.

வித்வான்களின் கருத்து :

கே.எஸ்.என். பற்றி செம்மங்குடி அவர்கள் ஒரு சமயம் கூறியது :

கரை கண்டவர் கிடையாது என்று சொல்லுவார்கள். ஆனால் நம் நாராயண ஸ்வாமி அதைக் கண்டவர்.

ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி கே.வி. நாராயணஸ்வாமி : நாராயணஸ்வாமி ஸார் கச்சேரிக்கிடையில் ஸ்ருதி சேர்ப்பது கூட கேட்பதற்கு ரொம்ப ரம்யமாக இருக்கும்.

மருதங்க வித்வான் ஸ்ரீ பாலக்காடு மணியய்யர் : கே.எஸ்.என். க்ருதிகளை ரொம்ப அழகாக வாசிக்கும் முறை, ராக பாவம், தாளத்தின் லாவகம் இவை அவருக்கு பக்கமேளம் வாசிக்க ரொம்ப உற்சாகமாக இருக்கும் என்பாராம்.

இன்று ஸாரின் சிஷ்யர்களில் பலர் நாடெங்கும் பல பாகங்களிலும் நல்ல ஆசிரியர்களாகவும், கச்சேரி கலைஞர்களாகவும், ஆகாசவாணி, தொலைக்காட்சி கேந்திரங்களில் “ஏ” க்ரேட் கலைஞர்களாகவும், பல பொறுப்பான பதவிகளிலும் இருக்கிறார்கள் என்றால் மிகையாகாது. பாரத்

ரத்னா ஸ்ரீமதி எம். எஸ். கப்புவக்ஷ்மி அவர்களும் ஸாரிடம்தான் வீணை கற்றுக் கொண்டவர்.

காஞ்சிப் பெரியவர் பரமாச்சாரியார் அவர்களின் அனுக்ரஹம் ஸாருக்கு பரிபூர்ணமாக கிடைத்திருக்கிறது. பரமாச்சாரியாள் அவர்கள் முன்பு நிறைய சந்தர்ப்பங்களில் வீணை வாசித்து அவரை மகிழ வைக்கும் பாக்கியம் பெற்றிருக்கிறார். பரமாச்சாரியாள் அவர்கள் ஒரு ஸந்தர்ப்பத்தில் வீணையைப் பற்றி என் குருநாதரிடம் சொன்னது:

வீணை என்பது புனிதமான வாத்தியம். அதை கையில் வைத்துக் கொள்ளவே நாம் ரொம்ப பாக்கியம் செய்ய வேண்டும். அதிலும் கவைவாணி ஸரஸ்வதி தேவியே வாசித்த அந்த வாத்தியத்தைக் கையிவேந்தி வாசிக்க நாம் பூர்வஜென்மத்திவ் புண்ணியம் செய்திருக்க வேண்டும்.

எனது குருநாதர் காட்டிக்கொடுத்த அந்த வழியிவே சென்று அவர் விட்டுச் சென்ற அந்தப் பணியை மீண்டும் தொடர்ந்து, அவரது பாணி மிளிரச் செய்வதே என் போன்ற அவருடைய சிஷ்யர்களின் கடமை.

Sangeetha Kala Acharya Smt Kalyani Sharma, ex-Joint Director of Sri Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, is a renowned Vainika-Gayaki based in Mumbai and a disciple of Veena Vidwan Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy.

Shanmukhananda Theatre Group in Kolkata

Santhosh Rajan



Smt. Padma Ray Bardan



Children who participated in the dramas

Shanmukhananda theatre group was invited by Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Kolkata to perform two of their dramas at their Sabha. *Bandham* and *Guruvandanam* were performed on 9th and 10th of September 2014 respectively at Thyagaraja Hall, Lake View area, and were very well received by the Kolkata audience. The important aspect of this performance is the participation by the local artistes, especially children with enthusiasm. This added colour to both the dramas. We are thankful to Srimathi Padma Ray Bardan, for choosing the right candidates for the concerned characters and training them for the show. She herself gave a convincing performance in a small role. The others who participated in the dramas are Master Vittal, Srihari, Trishant, Khushaj, Ritika Nair, R. N. Kirtana, S. Sabareesh, Sri Srinivasan and Venkateswaran, who contributed to the success of the dramas. This is the second time STG had performed outside Mumbai, the first time being at Krishna Gana Sabha in 2012- *Bharatha Peroli Bharathi* which received a standing ovation from the audience and praise from the late Shri K. Balachander

Memories of my Guru Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy

Jayashree Aravind



< Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K. S. Narayanaswamy

September 2014 marks the birth centenary year of Veena maestro K.S.Narayanaswamy.

To his contemporaries he was a musician's musician. For an ardent rasika, he was a repository of valuable, solid, Sastra -based music. For his disciples, he unswervingly strived to light the path of Sampradaya Sangeetha of the highest order.

Music of the Master

K.S.Narayanaswamy, for his lifetime, lived as a teacher. More precisely put, he did not bother to make tedious distinctions whether he was a teacher or performer. For him it was only music that mattered.

After serving at Annamalai University where he had his education in music, KSN moved to Swati Tirunal Music College in Trivandrum, when Shri. Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer was the principal. Subsequent to his retirement from Swati Tirunal College, KSN moved to Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai.

In the tenure that he served the Sabha in Mumbai, the Carnatic music scene in the city glowed with a rare brilliance.

KSN was a person who seldom spoke of himself, who was always gentle in reprimanding his students, never spoke ill of a musician, and never ever resorted to bragging or blowing his own trumpet to procure concert assignments or titles.

He however set the highest standards in teaching during his tenure. In fact, the faculty at that time which comprised Shri. K.S.Narayanaswamy, Shri.S Ramachandran (Vocal), Shri T.S.Krishnaswamy (Violin) Shri K.R.Chandramauli (Mrudangam) formed the formidable team which had students from all over the city making a bee line for Shanmukhananda music school.

He never wrote down compositions for his students, but made them learn in his class hours, by a method of repetitions. Each student received undivided attention. Sangati by sangati the grandeur of the composition unfolded, as he taught. By the end of the song, you had it in your hands and reverberating in your whole system.

He had a method of teaching raga alapana. Essential phrases of the raga, he made the students to repeat after him. Never did he make students memorize arohana -avarohana in a boring way. Ragas like Huseni, Anandabhairavi, Kedaragaulai and Surati came alive in the classroom. Alongside, the student naturally and effortlessly grasped theoretical aspects without rote learning.

So also it was with swara kalpana. Even if it meant playing the same swaras as he did, he drove straight home the point of what swara combinations work, method of plucking, (the intonation had to be how you sing), what is an avartana length and how one had to work out combinations with 3 or 4 swaras.

He abhorred the practice of handling 'teermanams' without having a control of the above mentioned aspects.

He paid particular attention to how the compositions were learned and performed.

Paatantara Suddham essentially meant the composition showcasing the most appropriate sangatis of the raga, learnt with a sense of humility and bhakti. In his opinion, no musician can achieve much without working systematically to deliver kritis and keerthanas in this manner.

Vidwans and Vidhushis who came to perform in Shanmukhananda and other sabhas unfailingly visited KSN. Sometimes we had the pleasure of their company during class hours which broke into lively discussions on various aspects of music. Thanjavur Sri Shankara Iyer, Brindamma, Mukthamma and S. Ramanathan were some of the greats we encountered in our classrooms!

I visited him in his house, the day before his passing away. We paid a visit to the legend Dr. M.S Subbulakshmi who had been awarded Bharat Ratna. In her home, she described what a great teacher KSN had been to her. They discussed Todi and Dhanyasi, and she remarked to me, "You know how many times he has taught me this" – sounding like a little girl.

On the way back home we stopped on the way for some fruit and eats he loved- Aavin flavoured milk being one of those. On reaching home he made me eat some first. Entering the adjoining room, he instructed me to get him his veena. Seated on a cot, he played some of his favourites. It was noisy outside. I shut the door and was the sole audience to his last rendition. He showed me the difference between Sri, Madhyamavati and Manirangu, how it should be distinguished by the gamaka rather than by the aroha, avaroha karma.

He played a shloka from Ramayana and showed me how to pluck like pronouncing the words. Then he smiled his brilliant benign smile and handed me his veena to place on the rack.

"Porum", he said.

I did not realize that it would be the last time.

How does one repay this avalanche of kindness, this cascade of melody so generously given? One cannot. Some things are much, much, above petty calculations of giving and taking of this world.

Jayashree Aravind is a senior disciple of Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy.

OBITUARY



◀ Padmavati Shaligram

Padmavati Shaligram, a renowned vocalist of Hindustani music breathed her last on 20th July 2014 in Mumbai at the age of 96. She was groomed in the Jaipur- Atrauli tradition by her father and uncle who were students of Alladiya Khan, founder of the gharana. She began performing in public from the age of 13. Besides being a top-ranking AIR artiste, she has also performed all over the country. She received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from the Government of India in 1988 and the Kalidas award in 1994-95. She also received an award from the Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal. She was well-known for her taan patterns rendered at an electrifying speed.

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Tribute to Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S.Narayanaswamy

Geetha Raja



Geetha Raja receiving the 1st prize in the All India Radio Music Competition for Carnatic Classical Vocal Music from Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S. Narayanaswamy in 1973. To the right is Shri.R.S.Bhole (Station Director, AIR Mumbai)

Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S. Narayanaswamy (Koduvayur Sivarama Narayanaswamy) was born on 27 Sep 1914 to Narayaniammal and Koduvayur Sivarama Iyer in Palghat district in Kerala. I was fortunate to have had advanced lessons in veena playing from this great maestro when he was the Principal of the Shanmukhananda Music College at Mumbai. Together with my vocal music training, I was given instruction in playing veena from reputed gurus in Mumbai like Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy and Smt. Vijaya Viswanathan, as my parents were of the opinion that learning to play an instrument would be very helpful to my progress in vocal music. KSN Sir came to Mumbai as Principal of the Shanmukhananda Music College in 1970 and thus I had the golden opportunity of learning veena playing from him.

I admired KSN Sir as a performer who respected classicism and as an exceptional veena player who made no concession to the gallery. I was always struck by his capacity to bring out the essence of ragas in a very few phrases. He also used "meettu" or plucking the strings – to the minimum and thus brought out a "vocal" rather than an "instrumental" effect. This was the Thanjavur style of playing, in which subtleties and raga bhavam were given more importance than rhythm based calculations. Particularly, rakthi ragas like Yadukulakambhoji, Sahana, Dhanyasi, Saveri or Nilambari – were his forte and he could evoke the rasa or sthayi bhava immediately, with precision in the oscillation of notes.

KSN Sir joined the Music College at Annamalai University in Chidambaram where he learnt vocal music under stalwarts like Sangeetha Kalanidhi T.S.Sabesa Iyer and Sangeetha Kalanidhi Tanjore Ponniah Pillai, descendant of the famous Tanjore Quartet. He learnt the Veena under Desamangalam Subramania Iyer and the Mridangam under Tanjore Ponniah Pillai. From 1937 to 1946, he served as lecturer at the Annamalai University, his alma mater and assisted in publishing the Tamil kritis of Gopalakrishna Bharathi, Neelakanta Sivan and Arunachala Kavi.

Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy was invited by His Highness, the Maharaja of Travancore, to take up lecturership in Veena at the Swati Tirunal College of Music in Trivandrum. He later succeeded Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer as its Principal and retired from there in 1970. At this juncture, he took over as Principal of Shanmukhananda Music College of Mumbai and held this position for more than fifteen years, adding stature to this institution with his immense experience.

KSN Sir's method of teaching relied on the ancient "oral tradition" form of imparting knowledge, like how the Vedas were taught. He would dictate the lyrics first, with meticulous attention given

to pronunciation; then he would play each sangati many times till the student was able to reproduce it; he would also vocalise the same sangati to show the bhava. Hence it was a very effective combined vocal and veena method of teaching which left its impact on the student's mind.

In 1985, under a fellowship given by the Bhulabhai Memorial Institute, Mumbai, when Shri Soli Batliwala was its Director; my sister-in-law Smt. Aruna Sairam and I had the unique opportunity to learn vocal music from KSN Sir. An excellent vocalist in addition to being a vainika, KSN Sir taught us many compositions not often heard on the concert platform. To name a few: *Shri Muladhara* (Shri ragam—Muthuswami Dikshithar); *Vadanyeswaram* (Devagandhari – Muthuswami Dikshithar); *Anandanatesa* (Todi – Ramaswami Sivan) and *Kanakamaya* (Huseni – Swati Tirunal).

He would teach us by playing the veena and supplementing his teaching by singing also. In addition to teaching compositions, he would intersperse his instruction with a lot of pertinent remarks on "raga lakshana". He used to demonstrate the symmetry in the handling of gamakas in certain ragas, the differences between allied ragas like Ritigowla/Anandabhairavi; Durbar/Nayaki and so on. Elaboration on methods of raga alapana, the use of akara in ragam singing and thanam exercises – were other subjects he dwelt upon. He also used to relate stories about his gurukulavasam with Sabesa Iyer and his student days at Annamalai University, Chidambaram.

His method of teaching also took into account an important aspect of instruction which Hindustani musicians adopt. He had an analytical mind and had made a comprehensive study of vadi-samvadi relationships; graha, nyasa & amsa swarams - of various ragas which he would explain and demonstrate on the veena. Hindustani musicians usually always give these details about ragas to their students.

As a guru he was generous and kind to a fault. He never raised his voice, used to have infinite patience with his students and took a paternal interest in their progress. When he left Mumbai to settle down in Trivandrum, all of us gave him a fond and emotional send off at VT station, which I still vividly remember. I subsequently visited him both at Trivandrum and at Chennai, and till the end he was musically alert with his childlike smile and quiet sense of humour.

KSN Sir was a recipient of many awards including the State Award of Kerala in 1962 and that of Tamil Nadu in 1968; the National Award of Central Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1968; the Padma Bhushan from the Govt. of India in 1977; Sangeetha Kalanidhi from the Madras Music Academy in 1979 and the Swathi Ratna in 1999. When he passed away in 1999, the world of music lost an exemplary veena player and a good human being. It was indeed my great fortune and privilege to have known KSN Sir at close quarters and to have learnt from him.

Kalaimamani Geetha Raja is a widely travelled and well known Carnatic vocalist based in Chennai with many awards and titles to her credit.

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Tribute to KSN

P. Vasanth Kumar



Palghat R. Raghu and Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy

Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S. Narayanaswamy was a veena player who never sought to dilute his style to cater to the masses. His handling of the divine instrument was traditional and his playing was chaste, soothing and free of any gimmickry. He had a fine sense of proportion and always presented raga essays briefly without unnecessary elongation. Rakthi raga vinyasas were his forte and he revelled in expounding melodies like Sahana, Mukhari, Asaveri, Suruti etc to name a few. Even major ragas like Thodi, Kalyani, Kambhoji etc were played within a time frame of 6 to 8 minutes with the listeners wanting more from him. Possessing an enviable repertoire which comprised the works of the Trinity, Swati Tirunal and the padas of Kshetragna, Shri. Narayanaswamy enlarged his repertoire from vidwans like Thanjavur Sankara Iyer and T. Brinda.

His association with Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer is well known and together they did painstaking work at the Swati Tirunal Music College at Thiruvananthapuram, by jointly setting to tune and notating the compositions of the Maharaja. Semmangudi has gratefully acknowledged the assistance rendered by Shri. Narayanaswamy in his publications of the works of Swati Tirunal.

The doyenne of Carnatic music M.S. Subbulakshmi was a student of Shri. Narayanaswamy and has given veena duet performances with him on many occasions. This writer had the good fortune of attending their concert at the Madras Music Academy during the year Subbulakshmi was crowned with the Sangeetha Kalanidhi title. Their immaculate rendering of Syama Sastri's *O Jagadamba* in Ananda Bhairavi and the Varali padam of Swati Tirunal can never be forgotten.

Kalpana swarams were played by Shri. Narayanaswamy to a very minimal level and many a time he would even skip playing sol-fa passages for the main song. He revelled in Tanam playing and would frequently commence a concert with Tanam in one of the ghana ragas. He was a recipient of many awards which include the Sangeetha Kalanidhi, Padma Bhushan, Kalaimamani etc.

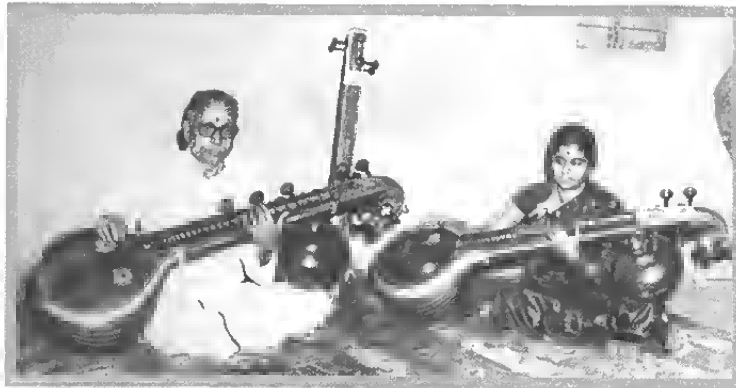
During his stint at the Shanmukhananda Sabha music school in Mumbai many benefitted from his expertise and authentic patantharam. The late Trivandrum R. Venkataraman, Kalyani Sharma, Jayashree Arvind, Nirmala Parthasarathy and many others were his students.

Aman of few words Shri. Narayanaswamy let his veena do the talking.

P. Vasanth Kumar is a senior Veena Vidwan, writer and music critic based in Chennai.

Musings of the Maestro

Kalyani Sharma



(l to r) Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy and Smt. Kalyani Sharma

(This is a reproduction of the article by Kalyani Sharma which appeared in Shanmukha in the issue of January 2000).

[Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy shared his thoughts and views with Smt. Kalyani Sharma when she met him in March 1998 at Trivandrum. Published below are excerpts from the taped interview]

What is the difference between raga bhavam and sahitya bhavam? Does bhavam mean the same in both? Often we hear different musicians handling a raga differently. Is it all right to do so?

I am only repeating what I have heard from my Gurus and other seniors. The swara combinations, its nedil and kuril reflect the raga bhavam. For example, let us take Todi. One must first observe the raga chaya – how its gandharam sounds on its own; how it is presented when combined with rishabham or when associated with madhyamam. The bhavam has to emerge clearly when one sings a raga - it should be portrayed in a way that enables the listener to grasp it. In an ideal situation both the singer's and listener's bhavam merge.

Some artistes do give it a different image. They use the same swaras but sing it differently. Their argument is why we should not sing it this way, after all we are using the raga swaras only. Let me explain it with an example. In temples during Navarathri we adorn the Devi in different ways. One day as Mahishasura Mardini, another day with gold kavacham, yet another day as a small child in a swing. But the Devi remains the same. It is the same basic swarupam that is being presented with different embellishments. The external decoration is done without impairing the beauty or changing the identity of the Goddess.

The same way a raga can be presented with different bhavams without marring its swarupa. A good Vidwan would have the required talent and ability to do it. To acquire the skill one must learn many compositions of renowned Vaggeyakaras and observe the way they have treated the raga, the sancharas they have used to describe a certain emotion, the features of gods, how they have used the sancharas below panchamam, how they have combined the swaras etc. Here the raga bhavam and sahitya bhavam merge creating great compositions. Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Syama Sastry's compositions belong to this category. They can be a great guide to those who wish to learn. One can notice this beautiful blend of raga and sahitya bhavams clearly in Meenakshi Memudam (Purvi Kalyani), particularly in the charanam.

Why do you disapprove of mikes and contact mike?

An infant talk (mazhalai) is soft and can be heard only within a certain range. Since you cannot hear it can you keep a microphone and enhance the sound? If you do it will be as pleasing as it would be in its original form? We can enjoy child chatter only when we hear it as it is. Likewise veena has to be heard with its original sound. Mike may enhance the sound but the very intricate gamakas and mild nuances will lose their charm when amplified. And they can be clearly portrayed only in a veena. This is, of course, my opinion.

Veena concerts are dwindling and so are the audiences for the concerts, Why is it so?

Instrumental concerts as such have always been far and few. There are not many violin solos either. Audiences do not appreciate veena or any other instrument for that matter, like they do the vocal music. It is understandable. Once Brindamma told me that to enjoy the Veena one required certain gnanam. It is true. No doubt vocal is more important because it comes from a human being. Here words can be heard and understood. When Tiger Varadachariar sang the charanam of *O Jagadamba* (Anandabhairavi-Syama Sastry) where the composer speaks to the Goddess like a child to his mother – (Why are you neglecting me? You are saving the whole world. Is it difficult for you to save me?) – these beautiful words combined with sahitya bhavam and raga bhavam were presented so well that the listeners were lifted to a higher plane. This is possible only when the audience can hear the sahitya and understand it. In an instrument the listener can only enjoy the raga bhavam. The sahitya is not heard. Hence only those who know the song and its wordings will be able to enjoy veena, provided the artiste plays well.

I will give another example. An artist paints various figures – God, rath, elephant. An observer will say 'Oh this elephant looks so realistic. Since he has seen an elephant and is familiar with it he is able to appreciate it. Otherwise he will say he saw some crooked lines in four pillars and so on.

Public do not appreciate instrumental music due to lack of knowledge. Hence Sabhas also face problems as there is not much collection when veena concerts are arranged. So they are reluctant to call veena artistes. It is sad because if the Sabhas who are supposed to promote good music do not do it, then who will?

How does teaching help a musician?

Teaching is a lesson to the teacher also. We have to learn and prepare ourselves first to reach them. When I was at Annamalai University, I saw a professor giving his notes to a student and asking him to copy it and return it soon as he required it to teach the next class. That shows how much pains the professor took to prepare himself for a class. If all our teachers are as sincere, the quality of our music will never deteriorate. Children will also learn with interest. There are some who feel that performing on concert platform is more important than teaching. I do not subscribe to this view. Only a musician with high proficiency, knowledge, clear thinking and commitment can become a teacher.

Sri Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya during my tenure had that kind of teachers. Some of them are still there continuing their great contribution to music. I enjoyed my association with Shanmukhananda and the 15 long years I spent in Bombay. I still have considerable attachment for the Vidyalaya. I wish it would reach greater heights producing good quality singers, Vainikas and other artistes.

Sangeetha Kala Acharya Smt Kalyani Sharma, ex-Joint Director of Sri Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, is a renowned Vainika-Gayaki based in Mumbai and a disciple of Veena Vidwan Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy.

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Shri Gurubhyo Namaha -
A Tribute to Sangeetha Kalanidhi
Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy
S.Rugmani Gapalakrishnan

इहानलुक्ता : July-Dec 2014



◀ *Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy*

My humble pranams to all my gurus who taught me vocal music and veena. With all respects to my guru Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy Iyer, I recall here my experiences during those precious classes I attended and the moments I spent with him while learning.

Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy Sir had a very unique bani of his own in playing the veena well known as Kerala bani.. I feel very proud and honoured that I am a disciple of Narayanaswamy sir, who never ever deviated from the shastras of pure classical music and never compromised. I feel that I am very lucky to have been a disciple of such a guru.

When I speak about the bani of my guru, I can very well say that it consists of very less "Meettu", which enables the listener to enjoy veena as one enjoys the sweetness of vocal music. This is because of his rendering style with purity (Sampradaya Shuddham), usage of gamakas as required and specially the fingering (viraladi) usage only wherever necessary. These are some of the things I observed while learning from him.

While I was a student at The Swati Tirunal Academy, I received the cultural scholarship from the Government of India to study under my guru for 2 years- 1954 to 1956 (gurukulavasam). Those two years enabled me to study every aspect of music from my guru. He taught me very melodious, sweet and divine veena playing which was his blessing.

All senior artists popular in those times were very much aware of Shri. Narayanaswamy Iyer's interest in music and his "Gnana" which was very clearly visible in his rendering and they all spoke about it often. He joined Annamalai University for vocal music, which was commenced that year only by his brother Shri. Govindaswamy Iyer. He was able to study vocal classical music as main subject and Veena and Mrudangam as subsidiary subjects from veterans like Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri. Sabesha Iyer, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri. Ponnaiya Pillai, Veena Vidwan Shri. Deshamangalam Subramania Iyer and so on. Thus he came out with flying colours from that institution. He started giving vocal concerts, but soon he realized that his voice was not co-operating well and so he concentrated more on veena and started giving veena concerts with much success.

He was a member of a cultural delegation and had the opportunity to go abroad. In the year 1970 he was invited by Yehudi Menuhin to attend the music festival at London, Bristol, Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham etc. In the year 1974 as per the invitation by the International Society of Music Education he took part in the 11th conference and taught pure classical music at Perth in Australia. In the year 1977, he attended the Indian Music and Dance festival at Berlin. The honours which came his way are innumerable.

Being a top grade artist he rendered numerous concerts – Radio Sangeetha Sammelan, National programme of All India Radio, etc. He had played in the Navarathiri Mandapam continuously for many years. With humble respects at this juncture I would like to write a few words about Shri Shivarama Iyer sir who was Shri Narayanaswamy sir's brother's son. Shri Shivarama Iyer sir had also taught me veena which has been a memorable experience. Both my gurus have been very good teachers and have taught me in such a way that I can never forget even a very small thing taught in a lesson. Shri Shivarama Iyer had been like a son and a student to Shri.

Narayanaswamy Iyer and served him and accompanied him in many of his concerts until Shri Shivarama Iyer sir attained paralokavasam.



◀ Shri. K. S. Narayanaswamy with his wife Smt. Chellammal

Smt. Chellammal was the better half of Shri Narayanaswamy sir who passed away earlier. They were blessed with a son.

I remember with great sorrow the day my guru Shri Narayanaswamy sir attained paraloka vasam on 9-12-1999.

Though Shri. Narayanaswamy Iyer has passed away from this world, the sound of his veena is heard even today by all music lovers.

Sangeetha Ratna, Veena Vadana Sastragna S.Rugmani Gopalakrishnan is a top grade Veena artist and a disciple of Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy. She is a retired Principal of Chembai Govt. Music College, Palghat.



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A Vainika who coaxed the Veena to sing

Janaki Krishnamoorthi

(This article appeared in the January 2000 issue of Shanmukha as a tribute to Shri. K.S.Narayanaswamy.)



◀ Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy

Pristine purity of swarasthanas, graceful gamakas and subtle embellishments – all exquisitely rendered with precision and great sensitivity. And the mellifluous music that emerged was more like a voice singing than an instrument playing, which was the distinctive style of Veena Vidwan K.S. Narayanaswamy, who recently passed away creating a void in the realm of Carnatic music, particularly in the arena of Vainikas.

KSN Bani

KSN, as he was fondly called, had evolved his own style which was called the Travancore style.

“Though his style is professed to be Travancore Bani, the latter is but one of many styles that evolved from the Tanjore school. Narayanaswamy Sir's style reflects the Tanjore school in toto. But he has also developed an idiom of his own in strict adherence to the Gayaki style”, explains Vidwan Kalyani Sharma, one of his senior disciples and a well-known performing artiste.

With this characteristic style, which is now also recognised as KSN Bani, the Veena maestro had carved a niche for himself with his own group of discerning rasikas. He always emphasised that the veena must evoke the human voice and he played the instrument with an ingrained sense of piety. No gimmicks for him. No sacrifice of quality or purity at the altar of showmanship. Naturally the melody that flowed from his instrument enveloped one with a sense of peace and contentment that one experiences when communing with nature. His alapanas effortlessly brought out the raga swaroopa. His tanams were in a class by itself. He was considered an expert in niraval, not usually attempted in an instrument. But the best part of his performance was the soulful rendering of the kritis laden with bhava, evocative of the moods of the composers. Elaborates Kalyani Sharma: “When Sir played kritis like *Meenakshi Memudam* (Purvi Kalyani – Dikshitar), *Giripai Nela* (Sahana-Tyagaraja), *Kshira sagara* (Devagandhari-Tyagaraja), just the kritis, one would get the feeling of having heard a full-fledged kutcheri with raga, niraval and swaram. That was his forte”.

KSN was never in favour of anything that marred the beauty of the gamakas or raga/sahitya bhavas like rapid renderings, aggressive use of tala strings and of course the contact mike. His repertoire of compositions was vast but he enjoyed handling the ghana ragas more. Some of his favourite ragas were Kalyani, Shankarabharanam, Todi, Purvi Kalyani, Saveri, Atana, Kedaragoula and Begada.

Born in 1914 in Koduvayur, Narayanaswamy received his initial training in music from his mother Narayani Ammal and brother Krishna Iyer. Later he joined the Music College at Annamalai University, Chidambaram and was trained by renowned vidwans Sabesa Iyer (Vocal), Ponniah Pillai (Vocal/Mridangam) and Desamangalam Subramanya Iyer (Veena) in Gurukulavasa atmosphere.

His musical career which spanned over five decades began in Delhi. In 1937 he returned to Annamalai University as a professor of Veena where he was involved in the publication of Tamil kritis of Gopalakrishna Bharati, Nilakanta Sivan and Arunachala Kavi. Then he joined the Swati Tirunal Music Academy, Trivandrum at the invitation of the then Maharani Sethu Parvathi. Here again he assisted the then principal Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in notating and publishing the compositions of Maharaja Swati Tirunal. Subsequently, he became the Principal of the Academy. After his retirement in 1970 he moved to Mumbai and headed the Sangeetha Vidyalaya at Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha.



< Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy with Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya Staff

(l to r) 1st row: R. Shakuntala, Kalyani Sharma, Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy, Acchuthan, Janaki Rangan
2nd row: Janaki Natarajan, P.N. Padmanabhan, Bombay S. Ramachandran, K.R. Chandramouli
3rd. row: S.Ramakrishna Sharma

The Vidyalaya rose to great heights under his Stewardship. He expanded the courses to include Violin, Mrudangam, Sitar etc., built a strong devoted team of teachers and raised the standard of teaching. Naturally, students flocked to the institution-there were around 500 students and

Veena students alone numbered 300! It was during his tenure that the Vidyalaya became affiliated to Mumbai University. Recalls S. Seshadri, a committee member of Shanmukhananda Sabha and until recently its Honorary Secretary :“Sri Narayanaswamy was a great Vidwan – first among equals like Devakottai Narayana Iyengar, M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavathar, S. Balachander et al. Shanmukhananda was fortunate to have him. When he was the Principal we never interfered in the management of the school since we knew it was in the safest hands. He definitely enriched the Vidyalaya”.

Great Guru

KSN was a great Guru and his teaching abilities were par excellence. All his disciples recall how he strove for perfection and never proceeded to a new composition till all the students learnt to play the old one correctly.

“He was a perfectionist and expected the same kind of devotion and commitment from his students. He was very particular about how each note had to be touched and how much each swara had to be oscillated. He would teach everybody equally. For those whose grasping capacity was less he evolved easier methods. Sir always had an analytical mind – a trait he acquired from his Gurus. Teaching made him get more involved in research and he advised us to adopt a similar approach. He used to say – “it is not enough to learn and play or sing a composition. You should observe how a particular Sangati is being played; how a particular swara oscillates etc”, recalls Kalyani Sharma.

Reiterates yet another senior disciple and performing artiste, Janaki Rangan :“He was a great teacher and learning under him was like a pilgrimage. He never used to talk about extraneous matter. It was just music, all the way in the class. He would make us play a Pallavi or a phrase several times till we got it perfectly. According to him only repeated play of a composition made it perfect. (Comparing it to a pickle, how the longer it had soaked in all the ingredients the tastier it became). And he would correct our mistakes gently without seeming to do so”.

Little wonder that many of his sishyas established themselves as top rank performers, some of whom have also held prestigious posts in renowned institutions. To name a few Sangeetha

Bhushanam (late) K.K. Sivaraman (ex-professor Swati Tirunal Academy), Sangeetha Bhushanam R. Pichumani, Gana Bhushanams, Janaki Hariharan and Shantamma (both served as Principal at Swati Tirunal Academy); Vidwan Kalyani Sharma ('A' grade AIR artiste in both vocal and veena, ex-professor of Swati Tirunal Academy and former Joint director of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya), Gana Bhushanam R. Rukmani, R. Subbalakshmi (both were professors at Swati Tirunal academy), Vidwans R. Venkataraman and Nirmala Parthasarathy. Even renowned musicians like Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi and Dr. Narayana Menon were KSN's Sishyas.

The veteran Vainika was not a publicity monger nor did he run after glory but awards aplenty have sought him out. Among the various honours bestowed on him, State Awards of Kerala (1962) and Tamil Nadu (1968), Central Sangeetha Natak Academy Award (1968), Padma Bhushan (1977), Sangeetha Kalanidhi (1980) are worth mentioning. He was also the Asthana Vidwan of Travancore and tutor to the Royal family.

He has performed extensively all over India and abroad. He was a member of several music and cultural delegations that toured USSR, Australia, Germany and East European countries. He attended the Bath Music Festival at the invitation of world renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin. He also performed at London, Bristol, Oxford, Cambridge and Birmingham. Menuhin was a great admirer of KSN and a close camaraderie developed between them. Likewise in India the association between KSN and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer which began in the late forties soon evolved into a close friendship. Both would spend hours discussing and analysing the various aspects of music.

Gentle & Simple

As a person too, the Veena virtuoso was a class apart. Simplicity of attire (a white Veshti and Kurtha) gentleness of manner and a friendly smile for one and all were the hallmarks of the vidwan's personality. He had an aura of contained dignity. "He was a gentleman to the core. I have never seen him getting angry or utter a harsh word". – states Seshadri.

Reminisces Janaki Rangan: "He never criticised anybody which was yet another great quality in him. He used to attend all the performances at the Sabha irrespective of whether the artiste was a student or renowned Vidwan and enjoy the concert sitting in the front row. But he never made any adverse comment about their performance. "It is their style of playing – what they have learnt from their Gurus. We should not comment on it", he would remark. He did not criticise even our performance. He would always point the best way to play without saying ours was not right"

Until his last days the great Vidwan harboured a soft corner for Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, his sishyas, rasikas and friends in Mumbai. They in turn held him in high esteem and cherished their association with him.

Janaki Krishnamoorthi is a journalist and a veena artiste based in Mumbai. She is a disciple of Smt. Kalyani Sharma.

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A Humble Tribute to my Guru Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S.Narayanaswamy

Lakshmi G. Krishnan



← Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K. S. Narayanaswamy

As a very senior veena player, perhaps the oldest living disciple of my master and guru, I have fond memories which are very green still, about K.S.Narayanaswamy sir. My talent for music was discovered by my grandfather Prof.Krishnaswamy, who was working in the University College, Trivandrum in the Department of Chemistry. So after my Pre- University from Women's college, I was admitted to Shri Swati Tirunal College of Music, Thycad for Ganabhooshanam course in vocal Carnatic music. I got the best training from great gurus like Sarvasree Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer, Nellai Krishna Murthy, Kumara Swamy, Harihara Bhagavathar, N.V. Narayana Bhagavathar, K.C. Kesava Bhagavathar, to mention a few. The different styles of vocal music

rendering helped me improve my imagination and talent, and I thought that I would pick up veena also, being one of the 4 female students who joined the very first batch (1952) which was started in the academy. Already my home was a like a museum of different musical instruments. My greatest blessing was when I got admission for Ganabhooshanam in veena to train under Vidwan K.S.Narayanaswamy sir. With great enthusiasm I picked up the grand style of this maestro, listening to his demonstrations and theoretical renderings. He had his own Bani which was sweet and akin to vocal rendering. The sound of veena appeared to me as the most pleasing of all sounds when he played. His articulation of the raga bhava, tanam paddhathis, swaram and niraval had a great appeal which I wanted to emulate. He would never get angry and was ever willing to help us clear our doubts. This subtle approach makes him one of the greatest gurus. Narayana Swamy Sir has always been like a light house guiding me to absorb the style he perfected. Even today I can easily recognize his style of playing- the Thiruvananthapuram style, of which he is a pioneer. I must say that I had the fortune to impart this style to the late Sangeetha Kalacharya Veena R.Venkatraman, when he learnt the basic lessons from me. He was joined by his sister Smt R. Subbulakshmi and later they made their mark as accomplished veena players. They were inspired to take advanced lessons from my own guru, the veteran maestro Narayanaswamy sir. My proudest moment happened in 2010 when I bagged the first K.S. Narayanaswamy award instituted by the Veena Sangeetha Sangh in recognition of my talents which really sparkled due to the sincere and devoted training imparted by my beloved guru. My musical journey now sustains me in my old age, and here, let me pay my humble tribute to Narayanaswamy sir.

Lakshmi G. Krishnan, a disciple of Shri. K.S. Narayanaswamy, is a Ganabhooshanam in Vocal and Veena (Carnatic music) and resides in Kerala.

A Tribute to Sangeetha Kalanidhi K.S.Narayanaswamy

N.Lalitha



< Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy

Born into a family of rich Carnatic music tradition, I too had a deep desire to play the veena like my elder sister Smt. N.Lakshmi, a distinguished disciple of the eminent veena maestro, Guru K.S.Narayanaswamy. After joining the Swati Tirunal College of Music, Trivandrum in 1952, I completed my Ganabhooshanam in Vocal Music. But then the desire to learn veena prompted me to pursue Ganabhooshanam in Veena under the masterly guidance of Guru K.S.Narayanaswamy, who was then the Head of the department of Veena. Each of

the sessions he handled was so impressive that I had a great learning experience. After passing out with first class in 1961, I got the rare opportunity of participating in the national veena competition organized by All India Radio. The able guidance and training imparted to me by my beloved Guru and my rigorous practice got me the First Prize, a gold veena which was presented to me by the first President of India, Shri Rajendra Prasad. This was a turning point which made me work even harder and I received the Central Government scholarship for veena for three years. This gave me the pleasure of training even more under my Guru. This was the time I was taught advanced techniques of playing the veena. He would demonstrate with great mastery, the courses of various ragas, swaras, niravals and the uniqueness of the positions of tanas. He would patiently listen to the doubts of the students and clarify them in a lucid manner. I was able to absorb special skills during the tenure of my scholarship. To this very minute I enjoy the beauty of his lessons as they are etched in my memory. I also had the advantage of visiting him at his residence where I was treated as a member of his own family. But then he had to leave from our neighbourhood to Bombay to take up the position of Principal at Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha after his retirement from the Swathi Tirunal Academy. Each time I went to Bombay I used to visit him to pay my respects. He was so happy to see me and offer his blessings. After a few years he returned to Trivandrum and I had the good fortune of seeing him more often and I also had the advantage of introducing him to my early students. I am proud to say that I still follow his tradition of veena playing and my students to this day are his students too in a way. This year (2014) the Government of Kerala presented me with the Sangeet Natak Akademi award for Veena, an honour I received just because of the blessings of my Guru. However the greatest blessing that I treasure is the rich tradition and style which I have transmitted to my own grandchildren. I feel that my master, the great guru, Narayanaswamy Sir lives forever. My humble Pranams!

N.Lalitha is a Ganabhooshanam in Veena and Vocal Carnatic music residing in Kerala.

Lucky Days of My Life

Sunil Pranavam



(l to r) Sunil Pranavam and Shri K. S. Narayanaswamy

My exposure to veena and its shape were only through pictures or images of the instrument at first. At that age, Kurup sir taught me a lot of things about various types of veena. This teaching, I believe, had a very important effect on me in having a flair to handle the instrument.

In my later years, by the blessings of Goddess Saraswathy, I was able to meet K.S. Naraya Swamy sir and do repair work for his veena. By that time I became confident in designing and moulding a veena.

After the demise of Kurup sir, I became the disciple of his disciple, Shri Vasudevan Pillai sir. It was during this period, I passed MGT Lower and Higher grades, of Madras Government. Then I had the golden opportunity to meet Tanjore Soma Sundaram Achari and learn designing a fresh veena and tuning it. Later in 1981, I enrolled as a student of Gana Bhooshanam in the Academy.

Even at that time, my wish to meet Semmangudi swamy, Chembai swamy, K.S Narayanaswamy and K.V. Narayanaswamy was remaining unfulfilled. In those days, there was a man named Appu Pillai in Trivandrum, who had a name in designing and tuning new veenas. No one else was able to do the job those days. It was at this time that I got a chance to meet K.S. Narayanaswamy sir. I was introduced to him by Pallavoor Krishnan sir.

Later Balambal teacher introduced me to Narayanaswamy sir. He came to know that my profession was that of repairing veena and harmonium. Without delay, he entrusted me a repairing job of harmonium. It was a very rare type of harmonium, which had German reed Bass tone and Female tone. It was presented to him by a foreign national, who had come to visit him. I was able to finish the work successfully and his kind words "very nice job" still ring in my ears; something which I cherish as a great award.

Once he asked me to revive a veena, which belonged to his nephew and disciple, late Sivaraman sir, who used to accompany him in every concert. This time also, by the grace of Goddess Saraswathy, the job was completed to his liking; later I found out that the instrument was given to me to test my enthusiasm on my job, and for him to understand how I could do a job to his satisfaction.

In those days, we used to have a lot of conversations, mainly about the refining jobs on a finished veena. Those conversations were very helpful to me in the successful finishing of work on the veena of Sivaraman sir. Nothing could match my happiness on getting his approval and hearing his comments about my job.

Once he rewarded my job by giving me a five hundred rupee note. The job, this time too was to do repairing and finishing jobs of a veena, which belonged to one of his disciples. The job turned out to be an elaborate one. The currency note, which was given to me had a mixed fragrance of sandalwood and khas-khas grass [ramacham]. He used to keep a wonderful collection of such aromatic things. As luck would have it, however hard I tried to keep the note as a souvenir, I had to let go of it, mainly because of my miseries. And then I realized that the memory of the reward and its aroma was going to stay with me for a very long time, till the Almighty decides to call me back.

During those days my visit to sir's home was restricted to two or three times a month, due to the burden of expenditure. When those visits happened, he would ask me to sit with him at the dining table. He had never allowed me to sit on the floor and have food separately, a practice of those days. Also he took special care to introduce me to his distinguished guests. These introductions were very vital in opening another vista for me; I got the opportunity of visiting other states and got introduced to personalities such as Dr. Balamurali Krishna, Veena Balachander, Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi, Kalyani Sharma of Mumbai and Vishalam Venkatachalam of Delhi. Above all, I was blessed with the opportunity of visiting the great Semmangudi. And also a lot of Veena repairing and redesigning works were in waiting for me.

My first visit to Mumbai in 1992 turned out to be memorable. Narayanaswamy sir already had written to Kalyani Sharma teacher about my Mumbai visit. On arriving at Dadar station, I was confused for some time but I heard someone calling me by my name, in my mother tongue. It was Sharma sir, husband of Kalyani teacher. Soon I was taken home by the kind gentle man, and from there he took me to the room which was allotted to me at the famous Shanmukhananda Hall. It was then that I realized the significance of the letter by Narayanaswamy sir, to Kalyani Sharma teacher, who was his disciple also.

Whatever knowledge I had gained from my gurus by sacrificing even food, came to a real fulfilment only on meeting KSN Sir. During those days, I had to make an overseas journey to Singapore in connection with my usual veena jobs. On my return I was very much shocked to know that KSN sir had been hospitalized for an abdominal surgery. I gave up all my other engagements and stayed with him at the hospital for the entire period of his stay. He used to tell me "nee enakku pirakkamal pona pullai" [you are my unborn son] seeing me with him round the clock, in the hospital.

The doctors had prescribed a diet of milk and egg to treat the deficiency of blood; but KSN sir being orthodox could not give his consent for such a diet. Then he made a suggestion that since he was unwilling to take the diet by mouth, he could be fed through tube. It was with my hand that I did the feeding; I joked to him that I was committing "punya-papa" by giving egg to a Brahmin; but KSN sir took it very lightly and told me not to worry. At least an order from the likes of Dr. Varma, could not be ignored.

After returning from the hospital, as he was slowly coming back to his normal life, one Friday evening on my daily visit to see him, he asked me to place a veena on his lap. Then he played the Bhairavi raga for a few minutes; he told me "Ithu Unakkaka than vasichathu" (I played this for you). My daughter Nisha Ponni got her very first introduction to music from KSN sir. He used to take her on his lap and sing to her the Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa of music and ask her to repeat after him. She was hardly three years old. Incidentally my daughter was his last disciple and KSN was her first guru.

KSN - one of the great people in my life; memories of them cannot be just contained in my mind. One always wonders whether meeting every one of them was a "niyoga" of mine; ultimately none of them is here with me except the long lasting memories, which come back to me at every turn of my lease of life here with Mother Nature.

Sunil Pranavam is a professional repairer of the veena and harmonium based in Kerala. He is also a trained musician.

My Precious Moments with Guru Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri.K.S.Narayanaswamy

Janaki Swamy



◀ Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy

I would like to mention here, the divine quality of Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy's Veena recital which I came to recognize much later in my life when I joined Shanmukhananda for my diploma course during his tenure as the Principal of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya. Many a time I used to feel that he is the avatara of Goddess Saraswathy. This is no exaggeration because only Shri. K.S.Narayanaswamy knew to play the veena without any gimmicks. The listeners are transported to a different realm of divine serenity. I am not going to elaborate on how well he handled ragas, tanam and songs because they are something to be heard and not described. Now coming to the part of his greatness, he stood by the principle of pure music sans any adulterated versions of

songs of great Vaggeyakaras for popularity. Once he was called to play for National programme of music in Mumbai Doordarshan when I had also accompanied him. The producers had to repeat a few takes of a certain song. The producers were North Indians with knowledge of Hindustani music. I was surprised when they told me "We have heard many veena vidwans play. None can equal the amazing clarity and purity of notes the way Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy plays them". He lived for the pure essence of veena-playing and naturally he was least bothered about the rasika following and monetary considerations.

Many great Western Maestros were in awe and admiration of his veena playing even though they could not understand our type of music. What he played nevertheless touched the core of their hearts. One such admirer was Yehudi Menuhin, a western music exponent in violin. I can go on and on about the greatness of Shri. K.S.Narayanaswamy but would conclude that when a pure music note is rendered, it definitely touches the divine chord in us thus transporting us to a different realm in the universe. That was the greatness of his music.

Janaki Swamy is a disciple of Shri K.S.Narayanaswamy.

T. Muktha (Mukthamma) – The Musical Genius and Renowned Guru

Dr. Nirmala Sundararajan



◀ The author with Smt. T. Muktha

This is the centenary year of Smt. T. Muktha's birth. Her biography is the story of a hundred years of musical tradition.

Muktha was born in 1914 (Tamil month Avani and star Barani). She was one of the six children, three sons and three daughters, of Kamakshi and Sundararajalyengar, a government official. Her elder sister was Brinda (Brindamma) the famous vocalist and her younger sister was Abiramasundari, the violinist. Kamakshi herself was one of the four daughters of Veena Dhanammal, considered the empress of Carnatic music.

The earliest musical training of Brinda, Muktha, and Abirami was under their mother Kamakshi. Kamakshi was planning a concert career for her daughters and sent Brinda and Muktha to learn from Kanchi puram Naina Pillai. Muktha was barely seven at the time.

Naina Pillai agreed to teach Brinda, but not Muktha, a decision that he would come to regret later. Kamakshi insisted that Muktha strum the tambura, while her sister Brinda would learn and sing. However, the vigilant Muktha absorbed everything that was taught by Naina through *sravanam* (by ear). The sisters thus learned for four years from Naina Pillai and gained a rich repertoire of about 300 Tyagaraja Kritis, apart from those of Syama Sastri, Subbaraya Sastri and Tiruppugazh.

It was in 1934 when Naina Pillai as usual arranged the Tyagaraja Utsavam at Kanchipuram that Kamakshi brought along Brinda and Muktha to render a concert. After listening, Naina Pillai praised Muktha and expressed regret at not teaching her directly, as well. Mukthamma used to often tell me how she always cherished the memory of Naina Pillai teaching a line of a song on Vijaya Dasami day one year. Following this the sisters learned a few songs including Padams and Javalis directly from their grandmother Veena Dhanammal. They also improved their range of knowledge immensely by learning from their aunt Lakshmiratnam.

Brinda and Muktha made their debut at the Jagannatha Baktha Sabha and commenced their concert career. Their sister Abiramasundari often accompanied them on the violin. The Vilamba Kala style of rendering of the Dhanammal school was strictly maintained by the granddaughters. Whilst Brinda sang in the lower octave, Muktha would sing in the higher octave, thereby making the rendering effective.

Brinda and Muktha stuck to tradition and never played to the gallery. Only people with refined taste could appreciate their music. Their audience invariably included many senior artistes of the day.

Around 1965, Brinda and Muktha stopped singing together much to the disappointment of the connoisseurs. Muktha had to come out of the shadows and stand on her own. This she did with remarkable skill and her sticking to tradition and the strict adherence to the Dhanammal style helped her attract a fan following of her own.

Muktha received the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1972. She was invited by the Shanmukhananda Sabha, Mumbai, to teach, which she did for a brief period. Then followed an era of teaching at Chennai. Muktha taught many students and gave Vidya Danam liberally.

Mukthamma belied the oft repeated statement that good practitioners do not make good teachers. She was not only a musical genius but also an outstanding guru. It was in that the Music Academy, Chennai, fittingly honoured her with the award of Sangeetha Kala Acharya.

Learning from Mukthamma was a unique experience. She would not only teach music but also take motherly care. She taught me almost all that was in her repertoire. It was my good fortune that she accepted my vocal support in her concerts and even asked the Sabha organisers to provide me a separate microphone. On occasions she would allow me to render raga alapana on my own and I would feel honoured.

The saga of Mukthamma ended on 11th March 2007. To her last day in this planet, even while lying in her deathbed, she would be murmuring one song or another.

Dr. Nirmala Sundararajan is a senior musician and disciple of Smt. T. Muktha. Currently she is the Head of the music school, Vani Gurukulam, Chennai, run by Sri Tyaga Brahma Gana Sabha.

OBITUARY



◀ Shri Adyar K. Lakshman

Veteran Bharatanatyam guru and exponent Adyar K. Lakshman passed away on August 19th 2014, at the age of 82. He had been ailing for sometime.

Guru Adyar Lakshman was born in Kuppam village in Andhra Pradesh. At the age of 11, he moved to Adyar to learn Bharathanatyam from the legendary Rukmini Devi Arundale. He took part in Kalakshetra's world-famous dance productions including 'Kutrala Kuravanji' and 'Kumara Sambhavam'. Apart from Bharathanatyam, he also trained in Kathakali under doyens such as Ambu Panicker and Chandu Panicker. His most notable appearance in Kathakali was as Sudhama in 'Kuchela Vritam'. In 1956, he was chosen to be a member of the Indian Cultural

Delegation that visited U.S.S.R and Eastern Europe.

His dance school Bharatha Choodamani, was established in Chennai in the year 1959 and served as a centre for training for several eminent dancers who have made a mark in the field. A most sought-after Nattuvanar, Guru Lakshman was going abroad regularly to conduct workshops and performances.

He received many awards including Padma Shri, Sangeet Natak Akademy Award, Kalaimamani and Natya Kala Acharya, among others. Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha conferred upon him the Dr.M.S.Subbulakshmi Sangeetha Pracharya Award on September 16th 2012.

Despite his far-reaching fame, he remained humble and served the cause of Bharatanatyam with quiet dignity. He is survived by his wife Vasantha Lakshman, two sons and a daughter. His untimely demise has left a huge void in the field of Bharatanatyam.

Remembering Srinivas, the Mandolin Maestro

Dr. Vasumathi Badrinathan



U. Srinivas had become synonymous with the mandolin

(This article is from Dr. Vasumathi Badrinathan's column *Noteworthy* published in *Asian Age News Paper* on 14-10-2014).

When the world of music heard about U. Srinivas' demise, there was disbelief. No one could believe it. No one wanted to. There he was a month earlier making music and now, gone! He undoubtedly went before his time.

He was before his time with his music too. When a young boy, shy and demure ascended the stage with an instrument unheard of, people looked askance but soon accepted him as the prodigy and the undisputed master. It was this young boy that I heard in Mumbai decades ago, letting his mandolin do all the talking. He spun those tremendously talented musical notes, one woven into the other, incredible flashes of mastery and virtuosity. The child took the music world by storm and his unknown strange instrument became a household name; he became Mandolin Srinivas. His father would sit behind him on stage, gently protective, silently appreciating the performance. Each time Srinivas would essay a passage, he would turn towards his father for the encouragement and cajoling. The silent language between them was not known to the listeners. But no doubt, it gave him the impetus to continue.

His head was often bent towards his strings, his fingers playing fast. Time and again he would lift his head and a kind smile would light his face up. This benign smile seemed to be his biggest charm, apart from his magical music of course. Traditionally weighty melodies like Thodi, Bhairavi, Keeravani and also elusive ragas like Bindumalini, Kapi received their best renditions at his hand. He had an ingenious way with the strings that seemed to give you the feel that the mandolin was made for Carnatic music. The infinite gamakas, the intertwining of notes, the resonance - it could almost sound beyond human and uncanny.

Very soon U. Srinivas became synonymous with the mandolin. He went beyond the Carnatic universe, collaborated with Shakti, travelled the world. He was a silent performer; one did not see much of him. Music was his spokesperson. A soft humility and simplicity accompanied him at all times. Whenever you met him, he seemed overjoyed. This was his way of expressing hospitality, of making everyone around feel welcome and part of his intimate circle. A non-descript man otherwise, it was his music that set him apart.

Srinivas became a celebrity musician early in life. He alone must have known the travails of a child having to take on adult-like challenges that surely must have robbed him of the small joys of a usual childhood. Success is a difficult master. The hardship and unlit parts of his life might have been some of his greatest challenges. We saw only the illumination.

Music chose Srinivas. He wore the mantle gracefully and departed as suddenly as he arrived on the scene. The mandolin stands bereft but the shine of his music lights the path.

Dr. Vasumathi Badrinathan is an eminent Carnatic vocalist based in Mumbai. She can be contacted on vasu@vasumathi.net

Birth Centenary Celebration of Veena Vidwan Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy by Mumbai musicians

Janaki Krishnamoorthi



◀ Group rendering of *Endaro Mahanu Bavulu Anthariki Vandanamu* by Veena artistes

On November 2, 2014, several Carnatic musicians, Sangeetha Sabha heads, students and others from all over Mumbai gathered at Bharat Ratna Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi auditorium in Bhartiya Complex Sion to pay their tributes to the Veena Maestro, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy on his birth centenary.

Titled "Veena Anjali" the programme organised by renowned Mumbai musicians Sangeetha Kala

Acharya Smt Kalyani Sharma, disciple of Shri K S Narayanaswamy and ex-Joint Director, Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya, Acharya Chudamani Smt Alamelu Mani and Smt Radha Namboodiri, Director & Principal, Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya was supported by Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai.

After the inauguration with the traditional lighting of the lamp by Smt Kalyani Sharma, Smt Alamelu Mani and Smt Radha Namboodiri, the auditorium for the next few hours not only reverberated with the compositions in Veena that were close to the great maestro's heart but also with his own Veena Dhwani, his thoughts and others' observations and perceptions of the Vidwan.

Veena Anjali

Shri Narayanaswamy or KSN as he was fondly referred to by many came to Mumbai in 1970 to head the Sangeetha Vidyalaya, after his retirement as Principal from Swati Tirunal Music Academy, Trivandrum. He was the Principal of the institution for over a decade and a half, raising it to great heights. It was during his tenure at the Vidyalaya and his stay in Mumbai that Veena gained great prominence in Mumbai.

It was only apt that Mumbai Veena artistes should come together to pay tribute to this great Guru. The Veena Anjali, the core part of the day's event, comprising group renderings, duets and solos were presented by Saraswathi Murthy, a disciple of Shri Narayanaswamy along with her students Radha Ramabadrana and Prabha Ramji; Janaki Krishnamoorthi, and Anuradha Srivatsan, both disciples of Smt. Kalyani Sharma; Saipriya Vishwanathan, Soumya Parthasarathy, Usha Swaminathan, Jyothi Ramamoorthy and Savithri Venkatraman, all disciples of Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy; Jayashree Arvind and R. Subbalakshmi from Trivandrum, both disciples of Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy. All the artistes were accompanied on the mridangam by Shankar Laxman, a disciple of Shri T.S. Nandakumar.

Significantly, all the participants performed without Contact Mic, in deference to Smt Kalyani Sharma's wishes, as Shri Naryanaswamy believed Contact Mics distorted the original tonal quality of the instrument and never used one in his lifetime.

Down Memory Lane

After the Veena Anjali, it was time to walk down memory lane. The audience was taken through an engrossing expedition of the Veena Maestro's life and music through the screening of a

documentary film, conceptualised and produced by Veena artistes Iyer Brothers from Australia. Soon after, the special guests and others took centre stage to share their own experiences and perceptions of Padma Bhushan Shri. Narayanaswamy. President of the Sabha, Dr.V.Shankar, whose support and guidance played a significant role in making the event a success, was the first one to share his views. While recapping the Veena Vidwan's contribution to the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya's evolution he said : " Shri Narayanaswamy built the institution brick by brick, block by block to levels of eminence, no less than any of the great institutions in the country in the field of fine arts. He was a remarkable individual who elevated himself far beyond the ordinary, to showcase to the rest of the world, an example that was worthy of emulation" He added that the greatest tribute we can ever pay to KSN is to take steps to preserve and promote the veena, which is slowly but surely being eclipsed from the mainstream.

As a first step towards this goal he announced the setting up of a centenary endowment of Rs. one lakh in Shri K S Narayanaswamy's name to be used for giving annual merit scholarships to proficient students in veena. He also added that the Shanmukhananda Sabha management committee will consider a proposal to institute an annual Vainika Award with a cash prize of Rs. 50,000 in the name of Shri K S Narayanaswamy to be conferred on one of the most proficient Veena Vidwans of today's times. These announcements were welcomed by the audience amid loud applause.

Gana Bhushanam Shri P.Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar who confessed he was not good at giving elaborate speeches, lauded Shri Narayanaswamy's veena bani and said that he was not only a great Veena Vidwan but also a great man. Natya Kalanidhi Guru K Kalyanasundaram who spoke next remarked : " It would be more appropriate to say that KSN worshipped the divine instrument rather than just say that he played it. He generated a large family of disciples who are now spreading the music all over the world."

Sangeetha Chudamani Shri G Balasubramaniam who was another special guest at the function, said that KSN was a great artiste, a great guru and occupied an unparalleled position in the world of Carnatic music, while sharing some relevant anecdotes. Shri T.K. Sankaranarayanan, Honorary Secretary, Bhakta Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Anushakti Nagar while recalling the concerts Shri Narayanaswamy presented at their Sabha said that his superb Ghana Raga Tanam was still resonating in his ears ! "KSN commanded great respect as a performing artiste and also as a Guru and carried his Vidwat lightly on his shoulders. He was simplicity personified and a man of few words" he added.

The last speaker of the day, Smt Kalyani Sharma shared her perceptions of her Guru. She said that her Guru through his veena performances showcased the veena in all its splendour and glory. "He demonstrated how the divine instrument should be handled and how it should be played to bring out the exquisite tonal quality and versatility of the instrument. After much research and analysis on the veena itself, which he said was his greatest Guru, he evolved a style of his own that became popular as the KSN Bani" she revealed. She also added that her Guru was highly revered by his contemporary musicians including master musician Shri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. "Semmangudi Sir, who is my vocal Guru, once remarked that Shri Narayanaswamy is one of the few musicians who has fathomed the depth of Carnatic music which is an ocean. Brindamma too was highly appreciative of his veena playing" she stated.

Smt Sharma also recalled her Guru's contribution to Shanmukhananda Vidyalaya's development and how the institute scaled new heights under his stewardship. "He introduced new streams like Veena, Violin, Mrudangam, Sitar, Tabla , built a devoted team of good teachers and raised the standards of the institution to be on par with Swati Tirunal Music College and Carnatic Music College. The number of students swelled from the initial 20 to over 650 during his tenure, with veena students alone numbering 300 ! I would say veena gained great prominence in Mumbai because of my Guru. He loved Mumbai and enjoyed his tenure at Shanmukhananda to a great extent" recalled Smt Sharma.

The Finale



◀ *Shri Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar presenting the K.S. Narayanaswamy Veena Sangeetha Ratna Puraskar 2014 to Smt Kalyani Sharma as other special guests look on (l to r) : Smt Radha Namboodiri , Smt Alamelu Mani, Sri. G Balasubramaniam, President Dr. V Shankar, Shri P Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Guru K Kalyanasundaram, Shri T.K. Sankaranarayanan.*

At the conclusion of the speeches, Smt Kalyani Sharma was presented with the "K.S. Narayanaswamy Veena Sangeetha Ratna Puraskar 2014" award by Shri Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar. The

award given by Veena Sangeetha Sangh Trivandram was presented at the event, at the behest of the Sangh, as Smt Sharma could not attend the award function held earlier at Trivandrum.

Soon followed an audio recorded interview of Shri Narayanaswamy conducted by Smt Kalyani Sharma and his delightful demonstration on the various aspects of veena playing. Both were highly appreciated by the audience.

The event concluded with the group rendering of Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kriti *Endaro Mahanu Bavulu Antariki Vandanamu* as a mark of respect to Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy, as also to several other musicians whose birth centenary was celebrated in 2014 including Shri C.S. Krishna Iyer and Smt. T. Mukthamma. Apart from the artistes who presented the Veena Anjali earlier, Usha Tyagarajan and Mythili Sampathkumar also joined in the group rendering.

It was no doubt a memorable musical journey for all those who attended the centenary celebrations.

Janaki Krishnamoorthi is a journalist and a veena artiste based in Mumbai. She is a disciple of Smt. Kalyani Sharma.

OBITUARY



Smt. Maya Rao

Renowned Kathak dancer and choreographer Smt. Maya Rao, died in Bangalore on 1st September 2014, at the age of 86.

Guru Smt. Maya Rao, recipient of the National Award for Choreography, was born in 1928 in Bangalore. She learnt Kathak from legends Shambhu Maharaj and Sunder Prasad. She practised the Lucknow and Jaipur gharana. She returned to Bangalore with a Master's in Choreography from the USSR in 1964. She established the Natya Institute of Choreography in Bangalore, the only institute in India to offer a degree in choreography. In a career spanning nearly eight decades, she is said to have trained close to 4000 dancers in choreography.

Some of her dance ballets such as Amir Khusro, Krishnadevaraya, Vijayanagara Vaibhava, and Masti's Kaamana Billu are considered masterpiece productions. In a region dominated by Bharatanatyam, Maya Rao is credited with introducing and popularizing Kathak to a large extent in the south. She was known for her mastery in abhinaya too. Her students can be found across the globe as accomplished artistes. She is survived by her only daughter, Madhu Nataraj, who is a renowned Kathak and contemporary dancer.

Sabha Roundup

Report

Vocal Concert by S. Saketharaman 12th July 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Patri Satish Kumar (Mridangam), Dr. S. Kartick (Ghatam), S. Saketharaman (Vocal), Akkarai Subalakshmi (Violin)

S. Saketharaman was featured in a kutcheri on July 12th in the monthly programme of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha. He was accompanied on the violin by Akkarai Subalakshmi, Patri Satish Kumar on the mridangam and Dr. S. Kartick on the ghatam. Beginning with Purandara Dasa's *Gananathana Vandisuve* in Nattai, he moved on to *Guruvayurappane Appan* after singing a brief alapana of *Reetigowlai*. He took up *Latangi* for elaboration. *Kriti* sung was *Pirava varam tharum*. *Niraval* was bhava-laden. He wove appealing one-avartana swarms and interesting korvais. Mention must be made of the excellent support by mridangam and violin at this juncture. After a beautiful alapana in *Ahiri*, he began with the anupallavi- "Nyayama Meenakshyamma" of the *kriti* *Mayammaanine*. The rendition in chowka kalam was soulful. In contrast, a very fast-paced *Sharavanabhava* of Muthiah Bhagavathar in raga *Pashupatipriya* was taken up next. *Thodi* was taken up for elaboration, in true *Lalgudi* style. *Grahahbedam* from *rishabham* and *madhyamam* added beauty to the alapana. *Emi jesitenemi* of Tyagaraja was sung with *niraval* at "kaamamohadaasulai" and *swaram* at "Sri Ramuni" followed by an excellent *tani avartanam*.

Purandara Vaibhava – Dance Ballet 13th July 2014



(l to r) Shankaranarayanan (Mridangam), Guru Jyothi Mohan (Nattuvangam), N.N. Sivaprasad (Vocal), Mangala Vaidyanathan (Violin), Subha Vithal & Pranamyia Rajeev (Dancers)

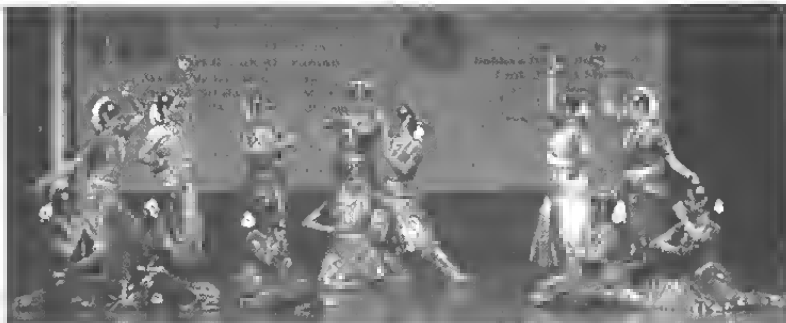
The dance school of the Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya staged a thematic presentation, 'PurandaraVaibhava' at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium on 13th July 2014. To commemorate the Sabha entering its 62nd year, sixty two students ranging from tiny tots to senior artistes participated in

this colourful programme watched by the members who came in large numbers, despite the heavy rains.

The choreography and direction by Guru Smt. Jyothi Mohan highlighted the different genres of music composed by Purandaradasa, the *Pitamaha* of Carnatic music. The evening commenced,

with the popular kriti, *Gajavadana Beduve*, in Hamsadvani. Stories depicting the origin of Ganesha's elephant head and the *mooshikavahana* made the song interesting. The senior girls danced this with great feeling. Taking the stage next were the tiny tots aged seven years onwards who danced the geetham, *Padumanabha*. The tableau depicting Vishnu-Lakshmi and Adishesha formed a fitting backdrop to the swara-sahitya presentation in the foreground. The tiny children in bright colourful *pavadais*, got a spontaneous round of applause for their neat and flawless dancing. *Bhagyadalakshmi Baramma* was presented like a grand celebration of Lakshmi puja, as is the vogue in homes in Karnataka. In the background ladies and children kept coming in for 'haldi-kumkum', sang in praise of the Goddess who was brought in very ceremoniously, partook of prasadam, all this adding a festive look to the kriti being delineated in the foreground by the senior dancers of the Vidyalaya. The composition on Siva, *Chandrachooda*, was choreographed in the varnam format the sahitya passages interspersed with jatis. Here mention must be made, of the interesting patterns in group choreography, making use of the large stage very effectively. Groups of students dancing with perfect technique and *angashuddham* created beautiful patterns while executing the difficult jatis. Entry and exit of these groups was well-coordinated. These alternated with the stories that were presented in the sahitya. The Amrit-manthan scene, the burning down of Manmatha by Siva, rescue of Markandeya from the noose of Yama were some of the stories depicted. The *nindastuti*, *Enthacheluvage* in Kamas was well-portrayed by the dancers. A commentary on the reluctance of people to give in charity was shown in *Ikkalarada Kai Enjilu* in raga Brindavani. The song was given a realistic touch with the domestic scene in each household that Purandara Dasa visited, asking for alms. The involvement of many children adding to the storyline in many kritis was noteworthy. Many of the songs were set to music by Guru Jyothi Mohan.

The latter half of the programme focussed on Purandara Krishna. In *Mellamellane Bandane*, Krishna's pranks and the anger of the complaining gopis was very entertaining. A harried Yashoda coaxes them to forget his antics and sing a lullaby for him. Switching over from Mohanam to Kurinji easily and again back to Mohanam as Krishna wakes up and continues his mischief, was accomplished with ease by the singer, N.N. Sivaprasad. The surprise twist in the depiction had the audience applauding! Tired of the complaints, mother Yashoda threatened to call the demon. A frightened Krishna pleads with his mother, *Gummanakareyadire* in raga Tilang. Through lively sancharis, Krishna tried to convince an amused mother Yashoda how he would mend his ways. As expected, when all attempts failed, he shed tears which melted the ever-forgiving mother's heart. The item ended with Krishna going away with his mother telling the audience behind her back, how he had managed her anger so effectively. That brought a smile to everyone's face. Young Pranamyia Rajiv as Krishna stole the show! *Azhuvuduthakko Ranga* in ragamalika showed how the gopis tried to find out the reason behind Krishna's incessant crying. The reasons for his misery as well as the remedies they tried made it very engrossing as the dancers did it most naturally. Finally, lulling him to sleep in *Toogire Ranganna*, another lullaby in kapi, they tiptoed out leaving behind a sleeping Krishna. As the audience burst into applause, the trio rushed back on stage pleading with the audience to keep silent, so as not to wake up Krishna. This was greeted by a roar of laughter and much applause by the appreciative audience.



Tillana performed by 13 dancers

Since Purandaradasa has not composed any tillana, his *Thath Thath Dhimi Thath* was adapted as a tillana. The huge stage was put to full use by the 13 dancers in the fast-paced choreography in several formations and combinations. The korvais in panchajati as well as the complicated shuddha nrittam at the end were greatly lauded. The sahityam was on Krishna. The programme ended with the mangalam paying respects to the Dasavathara of Vishnu. The *vadyavrandam* was led by Guru Jyothi Mohan on the nattuvangam, vocal support was by N.N. Sivaprasad, mridangam by S.Shankaranarayanan, violin by Mangala Vaidyanathan, ghatam by Swaminathan and kanjira by Vighnesh. The excellent makeup was by Murugan and team as well as Guru Lata Raman.

Carnataka Sangeetha Ponmazhai Tiruvizha 16th August 2014 to 20th August 2014

Vocal Concert by Padmashri Sudha Raghunathan 16th August 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Neyveli Skandasubramanyam (Mrudangam) , R.Raman (Morsing), Padmashri Sudha Raghunathan (Vocal), Raghu (Tambura), Raghavendra Rao(Violin))

The Sabha's glittering Pon Mazhai Tiruvizha at the Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium had a great start with Sudha Raghunathan's kutcheri on August 16th 2014, marked by allure and erudition. She commenced with the time-tested *Viriboni* varnam in Bhairavi followed by the kriti *Kari Kalabha*. She wove very interesting kalpanaswaram patterns for 'Kari' and 'Saveri'. *Ninne Bhajana* of Tyagaraja in Nattai, was taken up next. An evocative alapana of Varali was followed by Syama Shastri's *Karunajoodavamma*. There were fast sangatis in the Pallavi. Niraval at "Nee padambujamunu nammi" and kalpana swarams marked by vyavaharam ending with a complicated long korvai had the audience applauding. *Paramananda mam pahi* in Kedaram eulogising Lord Siva of Sreekanthaswara Temple in Thiruvananthapuram was sung with great feeling bringing out the raga bhava beautifully. This composition of Maharaja Swati Tirunal in Adi talam (2 kalai) has sollukattu in anupallavi which was sung in two speeds. The highlight of the evening and testimony to her creative ability was a very beautiful and elaborate Priyadarshini alapana. This janya of Sarasangi, 27th Mela, with Arohanam SR2M1D1N2 and avarohanam SN2D1M1R2 was followed by the kriti, *Rukminipathe* which has tricky combinations in the chittaswara. The kalpanaswarams at "bhaktajana" were innovative. The main ragam was Kambhoji. *O Rangasayi* with niraval and kalpanaswaram at "Bhooloka" was very well sung. The spirited tani of Neyveli Skandasubramanyam on the mridangam and R.Raman on the morsing was well appreciated. Ascintillating Shanmukhapriya with interesting grahabhedam was followed by tanam accompanied by the mridangam. A crisp pallavi *Malmaruga Guha Shanmukha* in Khanda Ekam with ragamalika swaram in Sahana, Hamsanandi, and Rasikapriya was sung to Tisratripulai talam. *Vishamakkara Kannan* was rendered in Chenjuruti. *Sloka Vasudevam* in Sindhubhairavi led to a melodious *Venkatachala Nilayam* of Purandaradasa. A viruttam on Murugan followed by Lalgudi Jayaraman's Behag tillana brought to an end a lovely concert. Most of us carried home memories of that beautiful Priyadarshini, appealingly sung, in true MLV style.

Vocal Concert by Abhishek Raghuram 17th August 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Mysore Srikant (Violin), Guruprasanna (Kanjira),
Abhishek Raghuram (Vocal), Anantha R. Krishnan (Mrudangam)

Abhishek Raghuram brings a freshness of approach, with mind-boggling variety to each kutcheri that delights his rasikas and evokes spontaneous bursts of applause from them. The maturity in manodharmam, the ease with which he handles the melodic aspects as well as laya pyrotechnics belies his age! Blessed with a rich voice and abundant creativity, he is awe-inspiring to both, the young and old alike. On 17th August, he performed in the Pon Mazhai Thiruvizha at the Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium to a packed hall. He was accompanied by Mysore Srikant on the violin, Anantha R. Krishnan on the mridangam and Guruprasanna on the kanjira.

He commenced with the 1st Navagraha kriti, *Sooryamoorthi* in raga Sourashttram and chatusra dhruva talam. *Shree Varalakshmi Namasthubhyam* in Sri ragam was sung with delightful sangatis. He explored every nuance while singing the pallavi. The crisp kalpana swarams for "bhavana veda chature" were soaked in raga bhava and endings in ma and ni made it very interesting. Vasantha alapana showed his rich manodharmam with power-packed brigas and unique combinations. He did full justice to Tyagaraja's *Seethamma Mayamma*. Niraval was done for "dharanija bhagavathagre". Mrudangam support was excellent. Anantha's anticipation and deft strokes were a perfect match to the brilliant vocalist. The violinist Srikant reproduced almost the same swaras beautifully with kuraippu at ma. Abhishek took up Tyagaraja's *Balakanakamaya* in Atana. The rendering was excellent with meaningful sahitya enunciation. Varali alapana was an enriching experience with Abhishek traversing 3 octaves most effortlessly with gamakas woven into a variety of sangathis. Aesthetics reigned supreme and the raga flowered majestically with beautiful prayogas. Violin alapana was also very commendable. This led to Syama Shastri's *Kamakshi* in Misra Chapu talam. He invoked Goddess Kamakshi in myriad bhava-laden ways that touched a chord. The tani avartanam that followed was scintillating with very intricate patterns woven by Anantha and reproduced by Guruprasanna. A light Khamas alapana led to the famous *Theruvil varano* in tisragati. He rounded off the concert with *Sarvam bramhamayam* in Madhuvanti followed by *Bhujaga shayino*, Swati Tirunal's mangalam sung in madhyama sruthi.

The young team complemented each other in virtuosity and the camaraderie on stage was palpable. The only regret was that the concert was shorter than usual due to paucity of time. It was indeed a memorable concert.

Vocal Concert by Bombay Jayashri Ramnath 18th August 2014

Jyothi Mohan

Bombay Jayashri Ramnath's concert on August 18th 2014 was distinctly Carnatic for an hour before moving into a sonorous Hindustani mode. She was accompanied by H.N. Bhaskar on the violin, Delhi Sairam on the mridangam and Anirudh Athreya on the kanjira.



(l to r) J.H.N. Bhaskar (Violin), Bombay Jayashri Ramnath (Vocal), Anirudh Athreya (Kanjira), Delhi Sairam (Mrudangam)

Starting with a fast-paced, breezy Nalinakanti varnam of Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman, she went on to sing *Shankari Neeve* in Begada. A contrast in mood was brought in with a plaintive *Bagayanayya* in Chandrajyothi. Fast kalpana swarams for the pallavi line in various combinations enlivened the composition. Amritavarshini was taken up for elaboration next. She brought out all aspects of the raga effectively with her lovely voice which has great felicity. The violinist Bhaskar's raga essay was also very beautiful. A well-sung *Anandaamritakarshini* was followed by very interesting kalpana swara patterns to which the violinist responded with equal verve. An elaborate Kharaharapriya matched by an equally brilliant raga sketch by Bhaskar led to a well-rendered *Chakkani Raja* of Tyagaraja. Cascading sangathis perfectly sung, brought out the beauty of this glorious composition. Niraval at "kantiki sundara" was very appealing with her students taking turns at singing in madhyama and druta kalams. Kanjira sounded enchanting. The tani was very exhilarating. The RTP in Patdeep-a Hindustani raga was sung with intense svanubhava. The pallavi line *Radhe Vraja Sundari Madhukara Kamini Rasa Leela Venu Geetha Rasike* was set to tisa jhampa talam in misranadai. She wove sangathis effortlessly and ragamalika kalpana swarams in Hamir Kalyani, Parameswari and Malayamarutham were indeed engrossing. A haunting Sindhubhairavi followed by *Ondu Baari Smarane Saalade*, Surdas' *Nis din barase*, a brisk Tilang tillana and a viruttam on Krishna brought to an end a deeply introspective and sublime concert.

Vocal Concert by Dr. S. Sowmya 19th August 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ Shweta Balasubramanian receiving the Thambura prize from Dr.S.Sowmya

The Pon Mazhai Thiruvizha on 19th August 2014 featured Dr. S. Sowmya. The prize distribution function of the Annual Music and Dance Competition held in February 2014, was held prior to the concert with S.Sowmya giving away the awards and prizes. The competitions were held on 1st and 2nd February 2014. This year the response was overwhelming with applications from all over the country, turning it into a pan-Indian competition in the real sense. There were 101 prize winners out of 348 entries for 56 endowments, both from Carnatic & Hindustani Streams (including Vocal & Instrumental). Out of 101 prize winners, 17 participants bagged more than one prize. 3 students of the Vidyalaya won 7 prizes in the competitions.

The Bharatanatyam Competition was held for the 5th year in succession and the response was good. There were 10 prize winners out of 60 eligible entries. 7 prizes were awarded in the Junior group and 3 prizes in the Senior group.

There were competitors from Chennai, Bangalore, Pune and through Isha Foundation from Coimbatore, Coonoor, Nagapattinam, Nagarcoil and Salem indicating the popularity of the Sabha's competitions.



(l to r) Poongulam Subramaniam (Mrudangam), K.V.Gopalakrishnan (Ghatam), Dr.S.Sowmya (Vocal), Raghu (Tambura), R.K.Sriramkumar (Violin)

After distributing the prizes, Dr. S.Sowmya began her concert. She was accompanied by Shri R.K.Sriramkumar on the violin, Poongulam Shri Subramaniam on the mridangam and Shri K.V. Gopalakrishnan on the ghatam.

She began with the Kedaragowlai varnam. A beautifully rendered *Sri Shankara Guruvaram Chintayami* in Nagaswaravali set to Rupakam, a composition of Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan, was sung next. She sang swaram for the pallavi line. The chittaswaram was sung with elan. A neat mukhari alapana was followed by Tyagaraja's *Sangeeta shastra gnanamu* with elaborate niraval and swaram at "Prema bhakti sujana". The violin embellished her rendering. A fast-paced Maharaja Swati Tirunal's *Bhogindrashayinam* in Kuntalavarali, was followed by a leisurely *O Jagadamba* of Shyama Sastri in Anandabhairavi. After a brisk *Sarasa Samadana* in Kapinarayani, she sang a lively *Aadikkondar anda vedikkaikkaanakkan aayiram vendamo* of Muthu Tandavar, in Mayamalavagowla. She took up Thodi for elaboration. A majestic exposition with myriad shades of Thodi beautifully interwoven led to Papanasam Sivan's *Kartikeya Gangeya* which was presented with great feeling. Niraval and kalpanaswaram at "Velmaruvum" were done with elegance. Sriramkumar's accompaniment stood out for the aesthetic touches in alapana as well as niraval and swaram. The tani by Poongulam Subramaniam and K.V.Gopalakrishnan was very lively and enjoyable, with good permutations and combinations. A melodious *Madhavamaya manavarupa* of Papanasam Sivan in Hamsanandi, javali *Parulanamata* in Kapi, a lively kavadichindu and a tillana in Amritavarshini rounded off the recital.

Vocal Concert by T.V. Shankaranarayanan 20th August 2014

Jyothi Mohan

On 20th August 2014, Padma Bhushan T.V. Shankaranarayanan cast his magic spell on his admirers who had thronged the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi auditorium. Vintage music by the veteran was lively from start to finish with never a dull moment! The opening *Jaya Jaya Swamin* was followed by Tulaseevanam's *Gayami Tavanama* in Huseni set to Misra Chapu talam. An elaborate Bahudari led to the popular *Sadananda Tandavam* of Achutadasar. Niraval and kalpana swarams at "buddharum siddharum munivargalum" were brilliant with Bhaskar matching every combination with verve. The lilting *Thaye Yashoda* was



(l to r) Patri Satish Kumar (Mrudangam), S.Venkataramanan (Kanjira), T.V.Shankaranarayanan (Vocal), Raghu (Tambura), H.N.Bhaskar (Violin)

followed by a detailed Mohanam. His essay of Mohanam delighted the rasikas. His exploration of the raga was marked by spontaneity, ease of delivery and aesthetic touches. A masterly *Mohana Rama* that followed delighted the listeners. Kalpana swarams that followed the niraval came like a hurricane, in his unique ascending predictable pattern which always appeals. H.N.Bhaskar on the violin and Patri Satish Kumar on the mridangam embellished it even more. The tani was no less exciting with Patri Satish Kumar on the mridangam and S.Venkataramanan on the kanjira. The percussion duo drew spontaneous applause from the audience. After *Sarasamukhi* in Gowdamalhar, he took up the RTP in raga Shanmukhapriya. The beauty of Shanmukhapriya came across through ingenious improvisations. The raga essay by H.N. Bhaskar won ready appreciation from the discerning audience. The brisk tanam, pallavi with various permutations and combinations followed by scintillating kalpanaswarams held the rasikas in rapt attention. The Pallavi *Sharavanabhava Guruguha Shanmukha Svaminathane*, in praise of Lord Shanmukha, set to Tisra Jathi Triputa talam was followed by ragamalika swarams in Behag and Sindhubhairavi. The audience sat glued to their seats soaking in the delightful music. The favourite tukkadas enthralled the audience. The viruttam *Karpuram Narumo* in Desh and Hamsanandi led to *Srinivasa* in Hamsanandi. The ever-popular *Eppo Varuvaaro* in Jonpuri was followed by the mangalam bringing to an end a very satisfying and memorable concert. The energy throughout the concert was palpable. The audience rose as one at the end, to give the Vidwan a standing ovation.

Vocal Concert by Gayathri Venkataraghavan – 21st August 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Manoj Siva (Mrudangam), S.Venkataramanan (Kanjira), Gayathri Venkataraghavan (Vocal), Raghavendra Rao (Violin)

The last of the concerts in the Pon Mazhai series was that of Gayatri Venkataraghavan. She was accompanied on the violin by Raghavendra Rao, on the mridangam by Manoj Siva and on the kanjira by S. Venkataramanan.

She began the recital with the sloka, *Om Namaha Pranavarthaya*, in true M.S.Subbulakshmi style. Parameshwara Bhagawathar's Natta raga varnam, *Sarasijanabha* in adi talam came next. Gopalakrishna Bharati's *Shivaloka nathanai kandu* in Mayamalava gowlai was rendered briskly with niraval and Kalpana swarams. She has a penchant for singing swarams in the higher octave. A neat Reetigowlai alapana led to Subbaraya Shastri's *Janani Ninnuvina*. One felt the *kalapramanam* was too *vilambam*. This was followed by a lively rendering of *Sri Sankara guruvaram* in Nagaswaravali. Dikshitar's Dwijavanti kriti, *Akhilandeswari* was sung beautifully. Kalyani alapana was classy and the leisurely development was replete with bhava. Tyagaraja's *Etavunnara* was sung well with elaborate niraval at *Seetha gowri* and kalpana swarams and was followed by an energetic and lively tani played by Manoj Siva and Venkataramanan.

RTP was in Valaji and Hindolam. Alapana in each raga was very appealing marked by perfect shruti alignment. The violinist played beautiful phrases alternately in both ragas. Pallavi was set to Khanda Tripata talam with *eduppu* at $\frac{1}{2}$ edam. The sahityam was *Maal maruganai Muruganai Thuthi Maname Umayaal Maganai Guhanai* and was sung in Valaji and Hindolam alternately. Trikalam and tisram were done perfectly. Ragamalika swarams followed, in ragas Vasanthi and Hamsanandi. Reverse swarams in Hamsanandi, Vasanthi, Hindolam and Valaji, with *korvais* alternately in Valaji and Hindolam were sung. Purandaradasa's *Jagadodharana* in Kapi was sung in typical MS style. *Aramude Arasae* in ragamalika and a tillana in Behag brought to an end the melodious recital of Gayatri Venkataraghavan.

Bharat Ratna Dr.M.S.Subbulakshmi Sangeetha Pracharya Award Ceremony – 16th September 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



◀ (l to r) President Dr.V.Shankar, Smt. Santhosh Rajan, Smt. Suguna Varadachary, Shri. S.S.Rajan

The Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi Sangeetha Pracharya Award instituted by the Sabha, is given every year to the best teacher of fine arts. A Fellowship has also been created in her name to benefit young and promising artistes every year. This year the award ceremony was held to commemorate the 99th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr.M. S. Subbulakshmi.

The programme started with a Sangeethanjali to Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi by her great grand daughter Kum. Aishwarya, who was accompanied on the violin by V.V. Ravi and K.V.Prasad on the mridangam, long time accompanists of Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi.

The main function began with a Vedic invocation by students of the SIES Veda Pathashala, Nerul. Asoulful rendition of the Meera bhajan *Hari Tum Haro* by Kumari A.K. Gayathry set the tone for the evening.

In his keynote address President Dr.V.Shankar spoke of the exemplary qualities of Dr.M.S.Subbulakshmi and the sublime quality of her music. He said that music was a divine gift to her and her music was soaked in bhakti. She was a 'manaseeka guru' to musicians all over the country. As a person, she was down to earth, affectionate, generous, caring and loving. Her life was one of fulfilment and achievement.

Padmabhushan Shri. P.S.Narayanaswamy, musician Dr.Prema Rangarajan, music lover and critic and former Administrator of The Madras Music Academy, Shri S.S.Gopal were felicitated in recognition of their contribution to the music field and for helping to identify the young awardees of the evening.

This year the Sangeetha Pracharya Award was given to Smt. Suguna Varadachary who has been a teacher all her life. A top grade artiste of AIR, she has carved a niche for herself. The award comprised a citation, prize money of Rs. One lakh, a Sabha icon, Navaratna mala, a set of books on Dr.M.S. Subbulakshmi and a kutthuvilakku. Representatives from sister institutions such as Chembur Fine Arts, Gana Kala Vidyalaya, Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Bombay Tamil Sangam, Vashi Fine Arts, Music Triangle and Rajarajeshwari Bharatanaty Kala Mandir also offered their felicitations to Smt. Suguna Varadachary.

16 young artistes were awarded fellowships this year and fellowships of 11 awardees of last year were renewed. The awardees of this year are Master Viraj Joshi, S. Akash, V.R. Raghavakrishna, Vasudha Ravi, J.K.Yoga Kirtana, Vivek Sadasivam, S.R.Vinay Sharva, Aishwarya Madhavan, Vivek Muzhikulam, K.P.Nandini, K.J. Dileep, K.H. Vineet, V. Sai Subramanyan, J.B. Sruti Sagar, K. Pravin Kumar and Dharini Veeraraghavan. A special feature of this year was that 16 year old Dharini Veeraraghavan, a student of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya was one of the awardees of fellowship.

The ceremony ended with *Maitreem Bhajata* being played in the background with all the artistes standing in reverence and singing along.

Rising Star Series 17th September 2014 to 22nd September 2014

Jayashri Suresh

The Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha had a feast for music lovers in the form of the Rising Star Series. This series showcased the tremendous talent of the new generation that is dedicated to this timeless art form. Twelve vocalists were invited to participate over six days and each day had two artistes performing. The first slot was from 6 to 7.30 p.m and the second slot was from 7.45 until 9.15 p.m. The artistes performed with verve and each performance while bristling with creativity served to showcase the tireless efforts of their respective gurus.

Day 1: 17th September 2014



(l to r) M.Rajeev (Violin), Prasanna Venkataraman (Vocal),
Anirudh Athreya (Kanjira), Delhi Sairam (Mrudangam)

Prasanna Venkataraman- A student of T.R. Balamani and subsequently trained by T.K Govinda Rao and now currently being mentored by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, his mellifluous voice set the mood for the series. Beginning with a varnam *Ninney Kori* in Kanada composed by Tiruvissainallur Narayanaswamy Iyer, he sang Tyagaraja's *Ninnunera* in Pantuvarali and a bhava-replete *Dvaitamu Sukhama* of Tyagaraja in Reetigowlai. The presentation of Indu and Nethra chakras in the Mahavaidyanatha Iyer's magnum opus *Pranatharthihara Prabho* was a treat to the ears. Next, he presented a detailed Kambhoji ragam and began Gopalakrishna Bharathi's composition

Thiruvadicharanam from the anupallavi with "Marupadiyum" with niraval and kalpana swaras at "Aduthu vanda ennai" and concluded with *Dikkuteriyada Kaattil* by Subramanya Bharathi.



(l to r) M.Rajeev (Violin), Bharat Sundar (Vocal), Anirudh Athreya (Kanjira), Delhi Sairam (Mrudangam)

Bharat Sundar - Storming the first edition of the Carnatic Music Idol contest of Jaya TV, Bharat Sundar received initial training from Smt. Leelavati Gopalakrishnan and is now receiving advanced training from P.S.Narayanaswamy. He began with a lightning fast *Janaki Ramana* in Shuddha Seemantini and presented crisp kalpana swaras in "Raktha Nalinadala" following it with a beautiful *Brocheva* in Khamas. *Amma Raavamma* of Tyagaraja in Kalyani ragam and Khanda Chapu talam was exquisite with raga alapana, niraval and swarams. He presented a variety of patterns in the kalpana swara formations. He followed this with the lilting *Rangapuravihaara* of Muthuswamy Dikshitar in Brindavana Saranga and a meditative and grand Saveri raga alapana singing Periyasaamy Thooran's *Muruga Muruga* in Misra Chapu where the niraval was in "Ariyadu Naanseida" and he concluded with a brisk tillana in Behag.

Day 2: 18th September 2014



(l to r) M.Rajeev (Violin), Bhairavi & Malavi (Vocal), Anirudh Athreya (Kanjira), Delhi Sairam (Mrudangam)

Bhairavi and Malavi - Disciples of Shri and Kedaranathan of the Semmangudi school, and currently training under Suguna Varadachary, this duo began with Tyagaraja's *Ramanannu Brovara* in Harikambhoji following it with *Nannu brovu lalitha* of Syama Sastry in Lalitha with kalpana swarams and Gopalakrishna Bharathi's *Varuvaaro* in Shyama. They showcased their prowess with a Ragam Tanam Pallavi in Mukhari set to Khanda Triputa tala with the phrase *Sarasija lochana maampahi, sajjana sangam dehi* and sang swarams in Behag, Sindhu bhairavi, Kapi and Desh. This was followed by a viruttam in Dhanyasi and the song *Bhaskarastutey Dhanyasin* and a piece in Abheri and concluded with a Tiruppugazh in Chenchurutti set to Sankirna Triputa talam.



(l to r) M.Rajeev (Violin), Sriranjani Santhanagopalan (Vocal), Anirudh Athreya (Kanjira), Delhi Sairam (Mrudangam)

Sriranjani Santhanagopalan- Training under her legendary father, Neyveli Santhanagopalan and blessed with a mellifluous silky voice, she began with the Adi tala varnam *Karunimpa* in Sahana. She continued with a sparkling *Nepogada* in Varali of Tyagaraja in Khanda chapu tala showcasing the raga exquisitely with kalpana swaras and following it with the Arunachala Kavi composition *Eppadi manam Tunindado* in Huseni set to Misra Chapu tala presenting the raga liltingly along with kalpana swarams. The main piece was Tyagaraja's lilting *Naadopasana* in Begada set in 2 kalai Adi talam where the raga was well sketched with scintillating niraval and swarams. She concluded with a small viruttam along with a song in Sindhubhairavi called *Tedi unai charanadainden*.

The accompanying artistes for Day 1 and 2 were M.Rajeev on the violin who captured hearts with his sweet and mellifluous playing, Delhi Sairam on the Mrudangam and Anirudh Athreya on the Kanjira who provided outstanding support and sparkled in their 'tanis'.

Day 3: 19th September 2014

Day 3 began with a tribute to Mandolin Srinivas by the President of the Sabha, Dr.V. Shankar.



(l to r) S.P.Ananthapadmanabha (Violin), B.S.Purushottaman (Kanjira), Aishwarya Vidya Raghunath (Vocal), R.Shankar Narayanan (Mrudangam)

Aishwarya Vidya Raghunath - A disciple of stalwarts like Seethalakshmi Venkatesan, P.S Narayanaswamy as well as Vegavahini Vijayaraghavan, she began with Tyagaraja's *Ra ra ma inti* in Asaveri where she sang kalpana swarams followed by Gopalakrishna Bharathi's *Vazhi Maraikkuthey* in Nattakurinji raga set to misra chapu tala with pleasing raga alapana and kalpana swarams. This was followed by a brisk *Varanarada* in Vijayasri and a competently sketched *Kharaharapriya* ragam. She sang the epic kriti *Chakkani raja* of Tyagaraja with niraval at "Kantiki Sundara" followed by crisp kalpana swarams. She concluded with a padam, *Payyada* by Kshetrageya in Nadanamakriya set to Tripura Talam.



(l to r) S.P.Ananthapadmanabha (Violin), B.S.Purushottaman (Kanjira), N.J.Nandini (Vocal), R.Shankar Narayanan (Mrudangam)

N.J Nandini - Hailing from a musical family and training under Parassala Ponnammal, Nandini began with a brisk rendering of Patnam Subramanya Iyer's *Ika naina* in Pushpalatika ragam where she presented niraval and lightning fast kalpana swarams at "Akalanka Neeve". Next came a slow and bhava filled Syama Sastry's *Mayamma* in Ahiri, Adi talam. This was followed by the kriti *Thaye Tripurasundari* of Periyasaamy Thooran in Shuddha Saveri set to Khanda Chapu talam where she presented an in-depth raga alapana along with niraval and briskly paced kalpana swarams. She exhibited her virtuosity by doing graha bheda in the raga alapana. The main piece was a grand raga alapana in Poorvikalyani where she sang Syama Sastry's Viloma chapu kriti *Ninnuvina gamari dikkevvaru* and presented excellent niraval with a difficult 'eduppu' followed by appropriate kalpana swarams. The melodious *Sagara sayana vibho* of M.D Ramanathan in Bageshri followed and she concluded with a taut tillana in Sindhubhairavi composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Day 4: 20th September 2014



(l to r) S.P.Ananthapadmanabha (Violin), B.S.Purushottaman (Kanjira), R.Karthik Narayanan (Vocal), R.Shankar Narayanan (Mrudangam)

R.Karthik Narayanan - A disciple of Raj kumar Bharathi, he began with the traditional Saveri adi tala varnam *Sarasooda* following it with Muthuswamy Dikshitar's *Siddhivinayakam* in Shanmukhapriya where he presented kalpana swarams in "Prasiddha Gananaayakam". He next sang Tyagaraja's *Etula brotavo* in Chakravakam set to Misra Chapu tala following it with a composition in Mukhari, *Entha ninney* in Rupakam of Tyagaraja where he presented raga alapana with niraval and kalpana swarams at "Kanulara". The main item was a meditative Poorvikalyani where Muthuswamy Dikshitar's swansong *Minakshi memudam* in 2 kalai Adi was sung with niraval and kalpana swarams at "Minalochani Pashamochani" concluding with a tillana in Sindhubhairavi.



(l to r) S.P. Ananthapadmanabha (Violin), B.S. Purushottaman (Kanjira), V. Shankaranarayanan (Vocal), R. Shankar Narayanan (Mrudangam)

V. Shankarnarayanan - A disciple of Vaigal Gnyanaskandan and late Prof. T.R. Subramaniam and now under the tutelage of T.V Gopalakrishnan, he began with *Mathe*, Muthiah Bhagvathar's daru varnam in Khamas followed by Tyagaraja's *Atukaradani* in Manoranjani set to Adi talam. Next was Subbaraya Shastri's *Shankari neeve* in Begada set to Rupaka talam where raga alapana and kalpana swarams were rendered. Then came Koteeshwara Iyer's kriti *Edayyaa gati* in Chala natai ragam set to Adi talam. The main item was a raga alapana in Kalyani followed by Swati Tirunal's beautiful *Pankaja lochana* in Misra Chapu talam with well executed niraval and swarams in "Brindavanantha krita". What followed was a ragamalika viruttam in Bagesri *Adum Parivel* followed by the song *Muruga muruga adiyaar patarin* by Subramanya Bharathi in various ragams like Nattakurinji, Bageshri, Hamirkalyani, Desh and Surutti.

Day 3 and 4 had S.P Ananthapadmanabha on the violin and excellent percussion support provided by R. Shankar Narayanan on the Mrudangam and B.S Purushottaman on the Kanjira. The artistes played robust and rich 'tanis'.

Day 5: 21st September 2014



(l to r) S. Shankaranarayanan (Mrudangam), K.V. Gopalakrishnan (Kanjira), Girish Surendra (Vocal), B. Anantharaman (Violin)

Girish Surendra - Possessing a voice endowed with deep bass tone, a rich timbre and 'ravai', Girish who is T. Brinda's grandson, began with the Sahana Adi tala varnam *Karunimpa* and went on to sing Papanasam Sivan's *Nekkurugi* in Abhogi. What followed was Tyagaraja's Adi tala kriti *Maakelaraa* in Ravichandrika ragam and then came Tyagaraja's *Paripoorna Kama* in Poorvikalyani ragam set to Rupaka talam where raga alapana was sung and kalpana swarams were executed. Next was the unusual *Chinna naadena* in Kalanidhi ragam by Tyagaraja set to Adi talam. The lower octave is this artiste's strength due to his bass voice quality and the main presentation of Subbarama Dikshitar's mighty *Shankaracharya* in Shankarabharanam in 2 kalai Adi served to showcase this aspect especially in the raga alapana, niraval and swara patterns. He concluded with Kshetragna's padam *Ososi* in Mukhari.



(l to r) S. Shankaranarayanan (Mrudangam), K. V. Gopalakrishnan (Kanjira), Aishwarya Shankar (Vocal), B. Anantharaman (Violin)

Aishwarya Shankar - After receiving initial training under Indira Renganathan of Kolkata and presently being trained by Suguna Varadachary, she began with a brisk varnam *Sarasijanabha* in Nattai ragam composed by Palaghat Parameshwara Bhagavathar set to Adi talam. This was followed by the vintage Atana ragam composition of Tyagaraja set to Adi talam, *Chede budhdhi* and then Neelakanta Sivan's evergreen kriti *Endraikku Shiva kripai* in Mukhari ragam set to Mishra Chapu talam. She began the kriti from the anupallavi at "Kandrin kuralai ketty". She then sang a melodious raga alapana in Begada for Swati Tirunal's kriti *Karunakara Madhava* set to Rupaka talam along with kalpana swarams. Next was Muthuswamy Dikshitar's *Shri Ekambranatham Bhajeham* in Poorvikalyani ragam wherein she rendered a classy raga alapana with lilting niraval at "Panchakshara mantra" followed by crisp and competent kalpana swarams. Next was a ragamalika viruttam *Kuzhalosai ketka manam vizhaiyuthada* in Desh, Yamuna kalyani and Khamas followed by a composition *Enna tavam seideyno naan* in Khamas. She concluded with a javali in Bhairavi *Elaraa yadaney kamini* by Tanjavur Chinnayya set to Adi talam.

The artistes for the day were accompanied by B. Anantharaman on the violin, S. Shankaranarayanan on the mrudangam and K.V Gopalakrishnan on the kanjira. They added lustre to the quality of the concerts with their excellent support.

Day 6: 22nd September 2014



(l to r) H.S. Sudhindra (Mrudangam), K. V. Gopalakrishnan (Kanjira), T.S. Pattabhiraman Pandit (Vocal), Shivakumar Anantharaman (Violin)

T.S. Pattabhiraman Pandit - A student of Prof. K.V Narayanaswamy and now continuing under Padma Narayanaswamy and blessed with a melodious voice, he began with the Saveri adi tala varnam, *Sarasooda* and continued with the Sriragam kriti of Muthuswamy Dikshitar *Shri Varalakshmi Namasthubhyam* along with kalpana swarams. This was followed by the

Poorvikalyani kriti *Deva deva Jagadeeshwara* of Swati Tirunal set to Adi talam where the raga alapana was filled with grace and grandeur and sparkled in the niraval and kalpana swarams. He was the only other artiste apart from Bhairavi and Malavi who sang a Ragam Tanam Pallavi. It was in Keeravani with the words *Madhava Sodari Sundari Manonmani Keeravani* and showcased various ragas. He concluded with a tillana in Poornachandrika set to Adi talam.



(l to r) H.S. Sudhindra (Mrudangam), K.V. Gopalakrishnan (Kanjira), Aditya Narayan (Vocal), Shivakumar Anantharaman (Violin)

Aditya Narayan - The youngest of this series at age 16, Aditya shot to fame in the talent program 'Swarna Sangeetam' and is a student of Suguna Varadachary. Blessed with a voice endowed with an enviable range, he began with the Adi tala Nattai composition of Tyagaraja, *Ninne Bhajana* and next sang a beautiful and authentic Harikambhoji Tyagaraja kriti *Dinamani Vamsa* in Adi tala. He then presented a very well sketched Mukhari ragam with the song *Entha ninney* by Tyagaraja in Rupaka talam. This was followed by the Bilahari kriti *Parithana michitey* by Patnam Subramanya Iyer in Khanda chapu talam. What followed next was a quintessential and very classy Kharaharapriya raga alapana with effortless grace with *Chakkani Raja* being sung with superb niraval and kalpana swarams. He concluded with an Abhang in Brindavani ragam. Day 6 had violin accompaniment which was excellently handled by Shivakumar Anantharaman. The percussion support by H.S. Sudhindra on the Mrudangam and K.V. Gopalakrishnan on the Kanjira was of an exceptionally high quality.

Poorvikalyani ragam seemed to be the hot favourite of this series and the audience heard a variety of compositions in that ragam by various vaggeyakaras. Mukhari came a close second and was also presented by many artistes. For the rasikas, it was a tiny music season come alive with young maestros performing and especially for the students of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya, it was a live lesson to observe, listen and internalise aesthetic nuances and creative grandeur. A couple of artistes complimented the Sabha on its excellent sound quality. The complimentary tea and coffee in the canteen served to energise the listeners who came from a tiring work day! All in all, the Rising Star series served to highlight the immense talent present in Carnatic music today and brought this talent closer to home.

(Jayashri Suresh is a senior student of Diploma in KVC (Karnatak Vocal Classical) at the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya).

Concert of Priya Sisters 12th October 2014

Nalini Dinesh

The Priya sisters have evolved a concert style that manages to draw in and keep the listener absorbed and wards off ennui with delightful surprises here and there - like the lovely *Aparna Parvati* in Nalinakanti composed by Mumbai composer Kalyani Varadarajan as announced by Haripriya after the kriti was rendered with crisp single avartana kalpana swaras, good

combinations in the long swaras and an elaborate finale shared by both sisters. The Nalinakanti alapana shared by both sisters was also delightful. *Kshitija Ramanam*, a Tyagaraja kriti in Devagandhari raga was followed by an imaginative Kharaharapriya alapana with a good variety of phrases by Haripriya. The kriti chosen was one of Tyagaraja's Kovur pancharatnam, *Kori Sevimpurare*. Neraval and kalpana swaras with varied patterns were sung at "Surulu veyi vanna...". An excellent tani avartanam by Delhi Sairam and Purushoththaman was followed by RTP in Poorvikalyani. A good alapana and elaborate tanam were sung and the pallavi was "Meenakshi me mudam dehi sada paradevi parashivajaye marakatha mani chaaye" set to Tisra Triputa tala in Tisra nadai with eduppu at 3/4 idam in the last veechchu. While the lyrics sounded beautiful, the setting of the pallavi was not very conducive for smooth and varied elaboration since there seemed to be too much sahitya packed into the tala. Kalpana swaras were sung in Bhairavi, Valaji, Madhukauns by Haripriya while Shanmukhapriya sang kalpana swaras in these ragas in reverse order. Trikalam was rendered neatly after the kalpana swaras. The post-RTP segment consisted of an Annamacharya kriti *Nee dasya okate* in Hindolam, verses from Adi Shankara's Sharadabhujangaashtakam sung in Kuranji and Sindhubhairavi prefixing *Srichakraraaja simhasaneswari* and *Kailasagiri undi* in Punnagavarali. M.A. Krishnaswamy provided able support on the violin.

Annual Music, Dance & Drama Festival 24th October 2014 to 28th October 2014

Dance Drama Patti Sonna Kathaigal by Shobana Bhalachandra and her troupe 25th October 2014

Jyothi Mohan

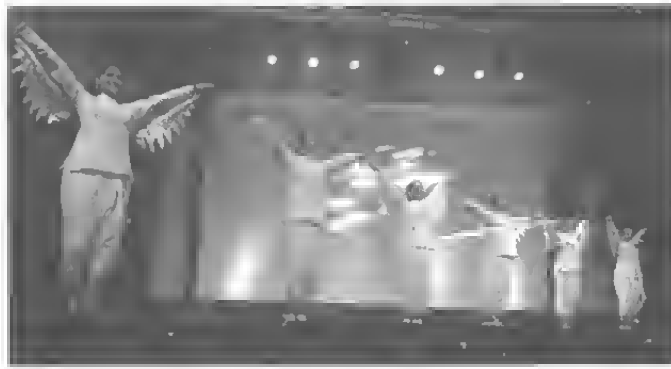


◀ Patti telling a story

Shobana Bhalachandra and her team Tharanginee brought their acclaimed 'Patti Sonna Kathaigal' to the Sabha as part of the Annual Music, Dance and Drama festival. All of us have grown up listening avidly to stories told by our very imaginative grandmothers, who wove into them simple morals for our day-to-day life. In today's world with nuclear families being the norm, children no longer grow up hearing these exciting tales. They are self-absorbed; all their dubious wisdom is garnered from their peers or from television shows and most grandmothers

living by themselves are hooked onto television serials. To bridge this gap, Shobana decided to bring to centre stage the Patti of yore with a happy following of lively children.

Enter the Patti (Usha Raj), with her basket of flowers and eager children clamouring to hear her stories. An introduction to the forest through various animals and birds, led to the first story which was about unity in strength. When the beautiful birds were trapped by a greedy hunter as they swooped down to eat grain, they tried in vain to free themselves from the net they were caught in. Then it occurred to them that singly they could achieve nothing, but collectively they could fly off with the net and thus free themselves from certain death. The costumes for the birds as well as the movements were well-conceived. The second story about the monkeys drew a lot of amusement and laughter from the audience. Anita's expressions deserve mention here. Doing good can beget only good was highlighted in the story of two women, one conceited and wily (Kalpana) and the other honest and humble (Indu). Both showed good command over their technique and abhinaya in the dance sequences. The last story was about a king who had become very arrogant. It was this arrogance that led to a very embarrassing situation. The day was saved by an innocent kid who thought nothing of telling the truth, thus opening the eyes of the king blinded by his own ego. Anita as the weaver essayed her role with flair and flamboyance. The Patti was most endearing and so were the little kids, some of whom were local little dancers. Music composition by Deepu Nair, Ganesh Muthu, Kalaimamani. T.K. Padmanaban, and Rajkumar Bharathi was beautiful.



Beautiful Birds

The excellent recorded music which had mellifluous vocal renditions were by Kalaimamani Radha Badri, Anand Aravindakshan, and Kum. Krupaa Lakshmi. Nattuvangam and Paatti's voice was by Neela Sukhanya. The orchestra consisted of G. Vijayaraghavan on the mrudangam, Kalaimamani TK Padmanaban on violin, Kalaimamani T. Sashidhar and Gurunathan on the keyboard.

Radha Raas Behari-Smt. Hema Malini & Natya Vihar Kala Kendra 26th October 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ *Radha swinging to Krishna's flute*

An extravaganza of superb lighting, colourful scenic backdrops and gorgeous costumes marked Radha Raas Behari presented by Hema Malini. The theme was the eternal romance between Radha and Krishna. The background scenes were reminiscent of scenes from Bollywood films with technology used to create effects as close to nature as possible. Scenes of idyllic Brindavan with green meadows, cascading waterfalls, gurgling streams were all brought alive on the LED

screen on the stage. Even the peacocks, swing and other props were beautifully realistic.

The energetic gopas and the enchanting gopis formed the background for the romantic scenes between Radha and Krishna. The fight between Kamsa and Krishna was like in a movie, larger than life. It began on the stage and went on to the screen behind where Kamsa appeared larger than life. The bitter fight ended on stage with Krishna flinging Kamsa's lifeless body right across the stage! It seemed like the end of a villain in a Hindi movie! Hema Malini looked every inch the dream girl while Raul D'Souza played the mischievous, teasing, but endearing Krishna. They had several scenes of active dancing together. Hema Malini's costumes were very beautiful and elaborately embroidered. The choreography by Bhushan Lakhandri involved all types of dances. Music too was well-recorded, employing different genres of music. Lighting added a lot to the gloss and glitter of the production lifting the production from mundane to surreal levels. The audience was very thrilled with this Bollywood-like offering and could not take their eyes off the enchanting Dream Girl.

Dwaram – The Door by Vani Ganapathy & Satyanarayana Raju 27th October 2014

Jyothi Mohan

It is said that walls have ears, but Vani Ganapathy's brainchild, Dwaram' revealed doors have eyes and ears! Vani Ganapathy who is no stranger to Mumbai audiences, having lived and



Radha and Gopis

danced here for many years, teamed up with leading dancer from Bengaluru, Satyanarayana Raju. Together they wove magic about the happenings in and around five doors, which stood as mute witnesses to what happened over the centuries. Presented by Usha RK, the slick production had fabulous lighting and excellent music score as well as aesthetic sets consisting of ornate doors.

The drama behind the Raja dwara unfolded as Yuddhishtira was tricked in the dice game to lose his brothers' kingdom and finally wife Draupadi to the wicked Shakuni and Dushasana. The agony and humiliation of Draupadi and her vow was melodramatic. Vani donned all the roles with dramatic ease.



Satyanarayana Raju as Veera Kanteerava



Romance in Gruha Dwaram

Veera dwara described the heroic exploits of Ranadheera Kanteerava. Sathyanarayana Raju lived the role of the brave warrior. His stance, quick-silver movements packed with force and agility brought alive the great warrior. The veera rasa was palpable throughout the depiction.

The Gruha dwara was depicted through two well-known compositions- the padam *Indendu Vachitvi ra* and the popular ashtapadi *Priye Charusheel*. The romantic interplay between the two, with Vani delineating the padam as the sarcastic khandita nayika, taunting her errant lover with mock anger and he responding with all the guile of an unfaithful nayaka, was rather overtly essayed. The Deva dwara portrayed the story of the young Andal. Satyanarayana Raju literally stole the show here. As Periazwar, he was the affectionate father, caressing the little baby he found, with such gentleness and love, it took our breath away. As the fond father, indulging her every whim, he revelled in the role of Vishnuchitta. The Atma dwara formed the fitting finale with the soul yearning for union with the absolute truth.

The excellent music composition as well as singing was by Debur Srivatsa who also wielded the cymbals. Deft, dramatic strokes on the mridangam by Lingaraju, enchanting flute by Mahesha Swamy, beautifully resonant veena by Shubha Santosh and special effects on the rhythm pad by

Manjunath added in no small measure to the success of the production which was much appreciated by a packed auditorium.

Vana Parvam- Dance Ballet By Bharatanjali of Smt. Anita Guha 15th November 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ *Sutradhar Revathy Sankaran with choreographer Anita Guha*

Anita Guha and the talented team of Bharatanjali won the audience over yet again, with their productions Vana Parvam and Virata Parvam on 15th and 16th November 2014 at the Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathy auditorium. Both productions were an audio-visual extravaganza with delightful dancing, melodious music, challenging choreography, snatches of suspense, fierce fights, mirthful moments, everything in the right proportion and high on aesthetics. The icing on the cake was mirthful and mischievous commentary

from the inimitable Revathy Sankaran. Most people have a funny bone, but she has more than a fair share of it and had the audience in splits!

The opening scene of Vana Parvam had the Pandavas worshipping Surya Deva in all his splendour and receiving the Akshaya Patra to take care of their food each day. The costumes of Panchali and Pandavas were simple and beautiful.



◀ *Draupadi and Krishna*

When Krishna (Pavitra Bhatt, disciple of Guru Deepak Mazumdar) arrives, Draupadi conveys her anger that her husbands stood helplessly whilst she was humiliated in the Kaurava court. She felt betrayed, her anger was palpable and her laments touched a chord. Lakshita Saravanan as Draupadi impressed. Her long, thick tresses were the cynosure of all eyes! The Pandavas needed celestial weapons and on the advice of sage Vyasa, Arjuna went to Kailas and stood in deep penance. This role was played by Shrutipriya (disciple of Suryanayanamurthy) who stood on one leg for a long time, displaying unbelievable strength and balance! After a dance with consort Parvati

(Medha Hari) in Kailas, Siva (Aishwarya) appeared as a hunter with his tribe. The folksy dance and colourful costumes with enchanting music and vigorous movements was engrossing. The entry of the wild boar (played with great energy by Renjith Babu), Siva and Arjuna fighting it and killing it was impressive. The dance with liberal use of martial art forms like kalaripayattu, was choreographed by Renjith (disciple of Prof. C.V.Chandrashekar) and was greatly appreciated. Siva, impressed by Arjuna's bravery, gives him the Pashupatastram. Arjuna visits Devendra and the beautiful apsaras dance enticingly. Urvashi tries to woo Arjuna and on failing to do so curses him. Medha Hari as the angry, spurned Urvashi impressed. In Bhooloka, during the pilgrimage of the Pandavas, various stories like that of Vatapi are related by the rishis. Unable to bear the travails of travel, Draupadi faints. Seeing her distress, Bheema (Smriti) calls Ghatotkacha who arrives dramatically to a jati hailing him. The scene of the mighty Ghatotkacha (Savitri Rajamani) and his men carrying the Pandavas was executed with great drama and fabulous synchronisation. Bheema (Smriti) going in search of the sougandhika flowers that Draupadi desired, his subsequent encounter with Hanuman (Vidya) and the humbling revelation to Bheema about Hanuman's identity was beautifully enacted with touches of humour. Make up and costume of Hanuman was very aesthetic. Wicked Duryodhana who comes to see the suffering of the Pandavas is taken prisoner by Chitrasena who ties him to the chariot wheel. The movement where he is being dragged along was superbly portrayed. Yuddhishtira (Satvika Ramani) pleading

for his release was in contrast to Bheema's anger. The scene with Krishna enjoying the company of the arrogant Satyabhama (Medha Hari) and the humble Rukmini (Priyanka) was also well done. When sage Durvasa visits the Pandava's abode with his huge entourage, a desperate Draupadi prays to Krishna to save them from the wrath of Durvasa. Krishna's miracle saves the day. The scene with a gamut of emotions was well-essayed by all the dancers. Thus came to an end the Vana Parvam enjoyed immensely by the large audience.

Virata Parvam- Dance Ballet By Bharatanjali of Smt. Anita Guha 16th November 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ Kuthuvilakku

Virata Parvam was staged by Anita Guha's Bharatanjali on the second day at the Sabha.

The opening scene took our breath away. For almost three avartanas of the invocation *Namaste*, the girls (forming the lotus of a kuthuvilakku) remained in a seated backward bend posture, around the resplendent

Goddess (Medha Hari) in the centre. The *Devi stuti* stood out for synchronisation, excellent *angashuddham* and perfect *araimandis*.



◀ Pandavas in King Virata's court

The Pandavas reach Matsya, the kingdom of Virata (Gayatri) to spend their 13th year of exile, incognito. Yudhisthira (Sativika Ramani) as Kanka, Bheema (Smrithi K) as cook Ballava whose vadai-making was most entertaining, Nakula (Shreya) as Granthika taking care of horses, Sahadeva(Shwetha Shankar)

as the cowherd Tantipala and Draupadi (Lakshitha) as maid to the queen Shudeshna (Divya), played their roles with conviction. Lakshitha's long tresses, as usual, were the cynosure of all eyes. The costumes were apt and very aesthetic. The entry of Arjuna as Brihannala (Pavitra Bhatt) from behind a curtain was very dramatic. Dressed as a woman in flaming red, Pavitra lived the role of eunuch Brihannala who was employed by the King to teach dance and music to his daughter. The dance lessons were in the form of a *varnam*. Both Medha and Pavithra danced exquisitely through the long dance sequences. In this production, items from the *margam* were woven into the narration. The lustful Keechaka harassing and molesting the pretty Sairandhri was played with conviction by Satvika Rajamani. When Draupadi described her plight to Bheema, he decided to trick Keechaka and kill him. The comic interlude between Keechaka and Bheema in disguise before the latter overpowered and killed the wicked Keechaka, had the audience in splits. The dragging away of Keechaka's lifeless body across the stage deserves mention. When Duryodhana attacks Matsya in the absence of King Virata, prince Uttara (Monaja) attempts retaliation. The depiction of his fear was not without humour and with Arjuna's help was able to emerge victorious. Arjuna discloses to king Virata that he and his brothers have been in his kingdom in disguise, over the 13th year of their exile. The marriage between princess Uttara and Arjuna's son Abhimanyu (Priyanka) was staged with all grandeur. As a fitting finale, the various *leelas* of Krishna were enacted in different corners of the stage, culminating in the *Vishwaroopam* amidst ecstatic dancing to the haunting refrain, "Krishna Krishna Jaya Hare".

The beautiful lilting music score and lyrics by Neyveli Santhanagopalan and P.R. Venkatasubramanian were sung mellifluously by Hariprasad, Sriranjani, Vasudha Ravi and Shravan supported by an excellent orchestra comprising Guru Anitha Guha on the nattuvangam, Suresh who handled all percussion instruments, Ranjani on violin, flute by Atul Kumar, veena by Padmini Lakshminarayanan and nadaswaram by Padmanabhan. Intelligent and very effective lighting was by Iyappan. Make up by Ramu and team was very commendable.

Anitha Guha's divine visualisation, eye for detail in every frame, aesthetic design of costumes and brilliant choreography left a lasting impression. As a Guru she is blessed with remarkably talented dancers who exhibited flawless footwork, abhinaya at its best and perfection in technique, exemplary synchronisation, presented with utmost grace and dignity. Indeed it was an audio-visual feast fit for the Gods.

Bharatanatyam by Smt. Rama Vaidyanathan 17th November 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ Divine Cowherd Rama Vaidyanathan

Renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Rama Vaidyanathan performed for the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha on November 17th. Learning the dance form under the tutelage of the legendary Yamini Krishnamurthi, Rama later also trained under Saroja Vaidyanathan her mother-in-law, who trained her to be a professional dancer. Having imbibed the best from both these legends, Rama has evolved a fluid style of her own and is recognised as one of the leading performers today in Bharatanatyam.

The evening began with the entry of the divine cowherd in the famous Krishna Leela tarangini, *Alokaye Sri Balakrishna* describing the mesmeric effect of Krishna's flute on the ecstatic gopis and gopabalas. The varnam on Lord Srinivasa, a composition of Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar in raga Vasantha set to Misra Jhampai was executed with sparkling jatis composed by Karaikudi Sivakumar. She portrayed the concerned doothika in *Dani korikenu* with finesse. *Mukhattai kattiyeh deham* was an outpouring of a sarcastic devotee and one missed the underlying devotion totally. In contrast was the vatsalya-laden *Momu joopara* of Annamacharya in Behag, where a loving mother Yashoda coaxes and cajoles little Krishna to give her a glimpse of his endearing face. The concluding *Shivoham* exuded energy and total surrender to the Ultimate. The orchestra comprising Subbulakshmi Ganesh on nattuvangam, Venkatesan's vocal, Arvind Kumar on the mrudangam and Rajat Prasanna on the flute embellished the recital.

15th Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award 6th December 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ Sanjay Subrahmanyam receiving the Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award

The 15th Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award was conferred upon leading vocalist Sanjay Subrahmanyam. Governor of Maharashtra Hon. Shri Vidyasagar Rao gave away the award, Citation, Bronze lamp, Shanmukha Icon, Crystal chain, 1 lakh cash award and Life time achievement trophy. This was his 1st visit to the Sabha. He highlighted the role played by the Sabha in promoting art and culture in the city of Mumbai.

The function started with Vedic recitation by the students of S.I.E.S. Veda Pathashala, Nerul. This was followed by the prayer *Shri Ramam* in Narayanagowla beautifully rendered by Aditya Madhavan and Hari Kumar which was appreciated by the President who said that the song brought memories of Semmangudi who had popularised the composition and the raga Narayanagowla. He also said that Sanjay's guru had sent him to Semmangudi to learn Narayanagowla raga. Sanjay Subramanyam was the 1st recipient of Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani award in the same year as Semmangudi R. Srinivasier who was conferred the National Eminence award and Shri Semmangudi had remarked that Sanjay should be awarded the National Eminence award at an appropriate time and true to the doyen's words, the award is being conferred on him after 12 years.

Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani was awarded to Dr. S. Karthick for Ghatam, V. Sanjeev for violin and Samrat Pandit for Hindustani Vocal along with Rs.25,000/- each and trophy.

Due to time constraints, Sanjay Subrahmanyam could not give his acceptance speech. He has however mailed it and we reproduce it here.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam's speech on receiving the Shanmukhananda Eminence Award:

Firstly I would like to thank the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha for having chosen to present their National Eminence Award to me this year. For a musician like me who generally comes out feeling very good about oneself more often than not, just a glance at the list of previous awardees is enough to give me an inferiority complex. To say that I am honoured to receive this today is an understatement and a bigger admission of false modesty than those that get reported in the media.

My family has had a long association with this organisation for many decades. My grand uncle Shri S Krishnaswamy (popularly known as Jagadhi mama) was one of the founding members. My father Sankaran has appeared on this stage several times during his years as a member of Cho Ramaswamy's Drama troupe in the sixties and early seventies. I have not had the chance to sing in this auditorium before it was rebuilt. However I made my first appearance in the Sabha's inaugural Youth music festival held at the SIES school. I was also delighted to be invited to perform the first performance in the newly built auditorium just before the formal inauguration. I can never forget the particularly special relationship that I have shared with Mr Seshadri, the former Secretary of the Sabha. The Sabha has retained its preeminent status in the Mumbai cultural scene thanks specially to the dynamic and forward thinking vision of its President, Shri Shankar. I will always be thankful to the Shanmukhanada sabha and to Shri Shankar for giving me the opportunity to spend 24 hours with the legendary Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in 2002.

Carnatic music has had a good innings as a performing art thanks largely to the patronage of kings, zamindars and wealthy and landed gentry especially in the nineteenth century. The early twentieth century created the sabha as the perfect community organisation that was suited for promoting and nurturing the classical arts. It is to sabhas that Carnatic music owes much especially the last 100 years or so. The Shanmukhananda Sabha has definitely played a premier role in this and it is with great pleasure that I would like express my thanks and appreciation to this great organisation.

I belong to a family of Carnatic music rasikas. Starting from members of my grandparents' generation we have been passionate lovers of this beautiful art form. My uncles and aunts were equally involved in the art and many more of them learnt the music formally. My grand aunt Smt Rukmini Rajagopalan who was also my guru, belonged to the generation when cricket still distinguished between Gentlemen and Players. She called herself an amateur in the true sense of the word and her skill sets were good enough to be on par with the best of the pros. My parents wanted me and my siblings to learn music only because they wanted the next generation of rasikas to be built up. A combination of good fortune, good teachers, hard work and support from

an understanding audience I have managed and continue to make a decent living as a Carnatic musician.

I began learning Carnatic music on the violin with Shri V Lakshminarayana. He grilled me in the foundations of this music. A combination of accidents and laziness ensured that the vocalists of that time had better violinists to accompany them. Smt Rukmini Rajagopalan was first a rasika and then a musician. The rasika in her drove her to learn from as many sources possible including Parur Sundaram Iyer, Papanasam Sivan, Koteeswara Iyer, GNB, Alathur Brothers and T Brinda. She passed on this vast experience to me wholeheartedly without holding anything back. I shall never forget one particular piece of advice she gave "Listen to all concerts. Some will tell you how you should sing while others will tell you how you should not!"

My guru Calcutta Krishnamurthy was a product of the wonderful gurukulam like system that was in vogue at the Annamalai University in the forties. He taught me how to think as a musician. He encouraged me to come out of my comfort zone and challenge myself continuously. His favourite phrase "All ragas are beautiful. It is the responsibility of the musician to bring out the innate beauty in them" Shri Sembanarkoil SRD Vaidyanathan passed away exactly one year ago. He was another guru who gave everything he had to me. Importantly he taught me how to sing with abandon and freedom the way the Nadaswara vidwans played in the open.

In my years as a performing artiste I have had some of the most wonderful musicians accompanying me on the stage. I will always be thankful of their patience and understanding especially when I indulge in pyrotechnics that may not exactly suit their own aesthetics. It is at those moments that I appreciate their sensitivity even more. I am particularly thankful to Shri Varadarajan and Shri Neyveli Venkatesh for their brilliance, support and sensitivity. I am also thankful to Shri Venkatramanan who is accompanying me today on the Khanjira. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the other awardees today and wish them all the very best in their musical pursuits.

Finally I am happy to say that Carnatic music as a performing art has boldly entered the 21st century shrugging aside the fears of many who thought the art may die. This is due to a whole new generation of musicians who have had the courage to stick it out and make something out of it. It is also due to the ever increasing audience that one sees growing in large numbers. Of course there will be changes and like everything else in life we have the capacity to move on and take these changes into our strides. After all we do have "Chakkani raja margam" that we trust in.

The award function was followed by a chaste, power-packed concert by Sanjay Subrahmanyam. He was accompanied on the violin by S.Varadarajan , on the mrudangam by Neyveli B.Venkatesh and on the kanjira by S.Venkatramanan.



(l to r) Neyveli B.Venkatesh (Mrudangam), S.Venkatramanan(Kanjira), Sanjay Subrahmanyam (Vocal), S.Varadarajan (Violin)

The Ata Tala varnam in Narayanagowla, Maguva was sung in 2 speeds. A beautifully sung viruttam, Pallandendru Pavithiranai in Nattai was followed by a spirited rendering of Pallandu

Pallandu. This was followed by *Sri Varalakshmi Namastubhyam* in Sri ragam. Brisk kalpana swarams were sung for the Pallavi line. A pristine Varali alapana by him was followed by an excellent essay of the ragam by the violinist. This led to a reposeful rendering of the kriti of Tyagaraja, in Misra Chapu Talam, *Eti Janma. Yaro Ivar Yaro* stood out for sahitya bhava. Starting with anupallavi, "Karulaavum sheerulaavum" he went on to do neraval at *Chandra bimba*, with the violin shadowing beautifully. A brief but striking Kuntalavarali alapana was followed by *Bhogindra Shayinam*. Kambhoji alapana was sung in nagaswaram bani with long karvais on shadjam of the upper octave. Varadarajan's alapana was a clear cut exposition, very well-rendered. Trikalam and tisram for the Pallavi in the majestically rendered *Sri Subramanyaya Namasthe* was well done. The scintillating tani was much appreciated. Sanjay received a standing ovation at the end of the concert that was well-planned showcasing a variety of ragas, talas, composers and rich in manodharmam and aesthetics.

Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award in Fine Arts 7th December 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ Dr. Gayatri Shankar receiving the Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award

The Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award in Fine Arts was conferred upon Dr. Gayatri Shankar. This award was instituted in 2003-2004 to develop and promote Carnatic music amongst youngsters. The award carries a citation, a shawl, a garland, a purse of rupees one lakh, a bronze lamp, a Navaratna mala and prasadam from the Kanchi Mutt. The

prayer *Hey Kamakshi* in Yadukula Kambhoji was soulfully rendered by Dharini Veeraraghavan and Abhilasha Chellam. The citation was read by Shri Amarnath Sury. In response, Dr. Gayatri spoke very humbly and said she visualised the image of Goddess Kamakshi in Mahaperiyava.

Dr. Gayatri Shankar is a child prodigy. After basic lessons in music from her mother she was taken into Kalakshetra by Rukmini Devi where she completed her diploma and post-graduate diploma in both vocal and violin. She continued her music training under maestro Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman. She is now learning under Shri K.J. Yesudas. A recipient of several awards, she received the Role Model Award (instituted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) in New Delhi on World Disabled Day in 2005. She received the Padma Shri in 2006, the Padma Sadhana Award in 2010, the Kalaimamani in 2011 besides several other awards.

Following the award ceremony, she gave a concert. She was accompanied on the violin by M.R. Gopinath on the mridangam by Shertalai Ananthakrishnan and on the morsing by N. Sundar.



◀ (l to r) Shertalai Ananthakrishnan (Mrudangam), N. Sundar (Morsing), Dr. Gayatri Shankar (Vocal), M.R. Gopinath (Violin)

Blessed with a clear, ringing voice, she commenced with an invocation to Lord Dakshinamurthy in true M.S. Subbulakshmi style. Lalgudi Jayaraman's varnam in Nalinakanti, *Neeve gatiyani* was followed by a brisk *Pancha Matanga* in Malahari. An evocative *Chandrasekharendra Saraswathiye Sharanam* in Hindolam followed next. An elaborate Saveri alapana led to Mysore Sadashiva Rao's *Shri*

Kamakoti Peetasthite in which neraval and kalpana swaram was sung at 'Kadambavana nilaye'. Tyagaraja's *Bala kanaka maya* was followed by the Ragam Tanam Pallavi- a dwi-raga pallavi in Charukeshi and Dharmavati. Pallavi was in Khanda Tripata Talam in khanda gati. The tani avartanam was engrossing with morsing deserving special mention. The concert ended with some tukkadas and *Maitrim Bhajatha*.

Theatre Festival of Sri Shanmukhananda Theatre Group 8th December 2014 to 11th December 2014

Santhosh Rajan



A Scene from *Mudalai Thottam*

The drama festival started on Monday, 8th December with the staging of *Mudalai Thottam* a new play by Shanmukhananda Theatre Group. The theme deals with the avariciousness for money with disregard to human values and relationships. The story revolves around a family of a daughter, two sons and their wives whose only interest lies in the property owned by the ailing, aged father. Their seething, selfish, open comments about sharing the properties among themselves after their father's demise, with total disregard to paying any attention to the physical and emotional needs of the father is compensated by the respect and attention showered upon the old man by his adopted son, the son-in-law, and the servant lady of the house. How the father splits the properties among his children which speaks volumes about his perfect understanding of their greed and the magnanimity of his adopted son, creating a tsunami in the family, is the crux of the story. The drama ends with a good solution to this turmoil because of the clever move made by the adopted son.

The story and the direction by Mrs Santhosh Rajan and the dialogues with a lot of punch written by Santhosh Rajan and Ponnambalam were appealing. Ponnambalam as the adopted son Gopi and Subalakshmi as the maid-servant were convincing. Santhosh Rajan as the scheming daughter and Ramesh Ramamurthy as her straight forward and sincere husband brought out very effectively the conflict between how elders should be treated but how they are being used and neglected in many families. K Lakshmanan and Ramakrishnan as the two sons and Meenalatha and Asha Varadan as the two daughters-in-law ably did their knavish characters. Pichai as the advocate who explains the legal aspects of the distribution of the property did his role well.

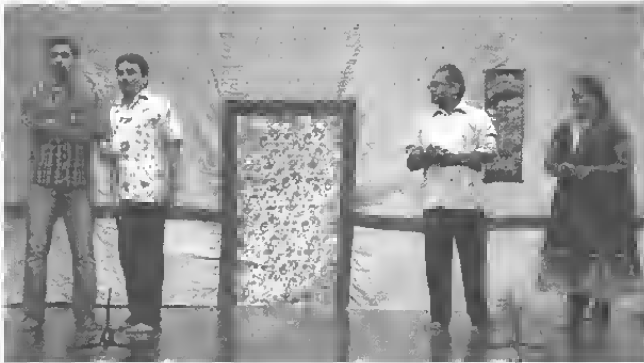
How just for a piece of flesh many crocodiles fight ruthlessly among themselves and how the adopted son fiercely guards the same piece of flesh from the other crocodiles for the benefit of the family is portrayed very effectively in *Mudalai Thottam* [Crocodile garden]. The fact that the audience enjoyed every bit of the drama was evident from their applause and laughter at appropriate places.



< A Scene from Petti Niraya Praptham

Ardhanareeswaram and *Petti Niraya Praptham*, two one hour plays are the first two dramas written by Santhosh Rajan and staged for the Members' Day in 2006 and 2007 which were revived on the 9th. Both the dramas along with entertainment conveyed messages which were appreciated by the audience. Difference of opinion between husband and wife is common but how far can we take it without understanding each other which results in unpalatable situations. Avoiding such results is better than late realisation and repentance.

When opportunities knock at our door many of us ignore them. When we realise our loss we blame it on praptham. This is the essence of the second drama. The LED screen fully utilised for the sets was a novelty. Devotees of Lord Venkateswara thoroughly enjoyed the Tirupati and other Perumal photos which were flashed on the screen. This beautiful power point presentation was made by Sriram Rajan. Other artistes K Lakshmanan, Santhosh Rajan, Aparna Natarajan, Asha Varadan, Jayanthi Muthuswamy, Ponnambalam Viswanathan, Pichai and Ramki contributed well to the dramas



A Scene from *Avi Vanda Mappillai*



A Scene from *Ada Kadavule*

Sathya Sai Creations from Chennai presented *Avi Vanda Mappillai* on the 10th of Dec. It was a total time-pass drama with the imaginary situation of a spirit entering the body of a doctor and the confusion it creates. The story line had twists and turns which were hilarious and ended with a note of expectation about what would happen next.

Ada kadavule!, their next drama contained a beautiful message and the dialogues were written with punch and practicality. It is commendable that both the dramas were staged with the minimum of stage settings. All the actors did their roles well.

The drama festival on all the four days was well attended by our members.

Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Festival 13th & 14th December 2014

Mahaswami Sangeethanjali by Malladi Suribabu and Malladi Brothers Sreeram Prasad and Ravi Kumar 14th December 2014

Jyothi Mohan

Malladi Suribabu along with his illustrious son Malladi Sreeram Prasad and Malladi Ravi Kumar performed the Mahaswamy Sangeethanjali at the Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi



◀ Malladi Suribabu being felicitated at the Mahaswamy Sangeethanjali

Auditorium on 4th December 2014. The MaSangeethanjali is the Sabha's musical tribute to Pujyasri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamikal. Suribabu was felicitated by Jayendra Saraswathi Swamikal with a shawl, garland, crystal chain, mementos of Kanchi Mutt, prasadam and a purse of rupees one lakh. *Ekambresha nayike* in Karnataka Sudha Saveri was rendered very well by Vimarshini Jairam, as the opening prayer song.



(l to r) Patri Satish Kumar (Mrudangam), Udipi Sridhar (Ghatam), Malladi Suribabu, Malladi Brothers Sreeram Prasad & Ravikumar (Vocal), Raghu (Tambura), A.Vinu (Violin)

Malladi Suribabu is a disciple of Shri Voleti Venkateshwarulu and Dr.S.Pinakapani. The concert commenced with a shloka on Pujyasri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi followed by *Sri Sankara Guruvarnam* in Nagaswaravali, in which they took turns to sing crisp kalpana swarams for the pallavi. A bhava-laden *Bhavamulona* in typical Nedunuri style was appealing. A majestic alapana of Devagandhari by Suribabuled to Sri Kamakshi sung briskly. Sreeram Prasad sang Mohanam alapana which was followed by a beautiful rendering of *Bhavanuta*, with kalpana swarams sung with several variations in single avartanam, for the pallavi line. Ravi Kumar sang Poorvikalyani alapana followed by a very evocative Jaagarti shloka on Chandrasekharendra Yateendra followed by Srinivasa Sharma's *Tvaamaham Prarthaye* on Mahaperiva in Misra Chapu talam. Neraval at "Chandrasekharendra Yateendram Sudhindram" was initiated by Suribabu. Dikshitar's *Panchashatpeetha Roopini* in Karnataka Devagandhari was melodiously sung. Thodi alapana of Suribabu reminded one of his mentor Voleti. Powerful voice, perfect shruti alignment and a weighty exposition that was classy. Violin alapana was also very good. Tyagaraja's *Koluvamaregatha* was sung in perfect kalapramanam and the mridangam accompaniment was excellent for this beautiful kriti rendering. Neraval sung at *Shree Karuni Ashritha Chintamani* was sung with great proportion, followed by an excellent tani avartanam. A lively rendering of Papanasam Sivan's *Paratpara* in Vachaspati was followed by a beautiful *Janaki Ramana* in Kapi. Bhadrachala Ramdas' *Govinda Sundara Mohana* in Dwijavanti was followed by the popular *Muddugare Yashoda* of Annamacharya in Kurinji. Suribabu sang a shloka in Sindhu Bhairavi and followed it up with Annamayya's *Adi Deva Paramatma*. The mangalam in Madhyamavati rounded off a lively, weighty concert by Malladi Suribabu and his sons.

Swarna Kanakabhishekam 14th December 2014

Nalini Dinesh

The Swarna Kanakabhishekam is a naimittika samskara performed by a householder when a great grandchild is born during his lifetime. The Swarna Kanakabhishekam of one the sabha's senior members Shri S.S. Rajan and Smt Vasantha Rajan was performed under the auspices of the sabha in a grand manner. The sabha has in the past celebrated the Swarna Kanabhishekam of distinguished members, Shri M.R. Doraiswamy in 2009 and Shri G.V. Jannah in 2014.

Shri S.S. Rajan has been a regular donor to the Sabha for its various activities. On this auspicious occasion Shri Rajan donated a dialysis machine worth Rs. 7 lakhs to the Sabha's Kansai Nerolac dialysis centre.

Here are a few glimpses of the joyous occasion:



Talent promotion concert of Karthik Suresh 28th December 2014

Nalini Dinesh

Karthik began his concert with Saveri varnam in 3 speeds and Papanasam Sivan's Shriranjani kriti *Gajavadana*. A rare Tyagaraja kriti in Swarabhooshani *Varadaraja*, a good Arabhi alapana characterised by clarity in sangatis and Nilakanta Sivan's Arabhi kriti *Neelakantha nityananda* followed. The kriti was rendered with neraval and kalpana swaras at "Balachandra sekharā". Karthik's Kalyani alapana was characterised by trademark phrases rendered fluently with desired punch and impact. *Amma ravamma* was rendered with neraval and kalpana swaras at "Tamarasadala netri". There was good vyavaharam in the kalpana swaras. A brief Durbar alapana and *Ramabhirama* were followed by an excellent bhava-laden Todi, again employing all the important phrases. The chosen kriti was *Koluvamare gatha* and neraval and kalpana swaras with an interesting korvai were sung at "Tambura chekoni". Tani avartanam by Sriram Subbaraman was impressive. Karthik then sang a very challenging pallavi in Keeravani set to Tisra Triputa tala composed by his guru Smt Vijayalakshmi Nathan - the poorvangam was in Misra gati and uttarangam in Tisra gati. The sahitya was "Un tirunamam ennaavil eppodum varavenum arul purivaay taaye". Karthik rose to the challenge with aplomb rendering trikalam neatly, singing kalpana swaras for "Un tirunamam" and "vara venum" with ease and rendering a complex and lengthy korvai perfectly. The concert ended with a tillana in Chenchurutti.

The concert's appeal would have been enhanced if there had been a greater variety of composers, since all the kritis were of Tyagaraja except for one of Nilakanta Sivan.

Tukkada 7¹

Quiz on Sangeeta and Natya

1. Who are the vaggeyakaras known as the Tamil Trinity?
2. What is the first reference to the bifurcation of Indian classical music into Carnatic and Hindustani streams?
3. How is the vaggeyakara of Indian classical music different from the composer of Western classical music?
4. Dikshitar's kritis are known for raga mudra, i.e., the name of the raga is skillfully woven into the text of the sahitya. Which is the raga that does not have any such mudra in any of his kritis?
5. Where do you find the swara notations of Carnatic music for the first time?
6. Swaraksharam is the technique where the swara and the sahitya are matched alphabet by alphabet. What are the three sub-divisions of swaraksharam?
7. Name two sahityas that have swaraksharam throughout the text – one old and the other new.
8. What is the special characteristic of the pallavi in "Palukukanda" in Navarasakannada in relation to the underlying swaras?
9. Who introduced the current format of kriti in pallavi, anupallavi and charanam?
10. Who were the harmonium artists of Hindustani music who received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award?
11. What is the equivalent of Carnatic music's niraval in Hindustani Music?
12. What is the equivalent of grahabhedam in Western classical music?
13. Which is the only classical dance style where always both feet are lifted in a jump (Utplavana)?
14. What are the components of anga shuddha in an adavu?
15. What is the difference between stayibhava and rasa in classical Indian dance?

¹The objective of the column is not only to test the knowledge of the readers but also to supplement it. They are welcome to send dissenting letters with supporting evidence, if they do not agree with the answers on page 82 . It is important for keeping the record straight.

Happenings at the Vidyalyaya

Report

Guru Poornima Celebrations 11th July 2014

Jyothi Mohan

Guru Poornima Celebrations were held at the Vidyalyaya for the very first time, on 11th July 2014 at the Jasubhai Convention Hall. It was a grand success in respect of participation. The audience filled the hall and many had to stand on their toes to view the programme! It was indeed a heartening sight to see such a large number of listeners.

The programme commenced with carnatic vocal performances. Sixteen of the 2nd Year students of Smt. Usha Shankar rendered Patnam Subramanya Iyer's Abhogi varnam set to Adi Talam, in two speeds. Enthusiasm and shruti shuddham were evident in their melodious rendition. This was followed by four of her students of the 3rd Year who sang *Mantrabalam Adainda* on Raghavendra Swamy in ragam Hamsanadam set to Adi Talam. This too went down well with the audience. 4th Year students, seven of them, of Smt. Lalitha Iyer took the stage next. The soulful Satguru Dashakam in shloka format was sung very well. Four students of her 5th year batch rendered GNB's *Sudha Madhurya* in ragam Vandanaadharini which was well-appreciated. All these singers were accompanied ably by K.S. Lakshmi on the violin, who is a student of Shri S.R. Ramachandra Sarma and on the mridangam by Shri S. Gopakumar's student M.K. Ramachandran.



(l to r) Prajesh C. Nair (Mridangam), Ramya, Thanishta, Akshathaa, Uma Babu, Aditya, Dhanalakshmi, Pavithra, Pradyumna (Vocal) Dharini Veeraraghavan (Violin)

Eight 6th and 7th Year students of Smt. J. Susheela Mani came up on stage next. Uma Babu sang a shloka on Dakshinamoorthy followed by *Guru Purandaradasare* sung by all, in Kalyan set to Misra Chapu Talam. They were accompanied on the violin by Dharini Veeraraghavan who learns from Shri S.R. Ramachandra Sarma and on the mridangam by Prajesh C. Nair who is a student of Shri S. Gopakumar.



◀ (l to r) Jayashri Suresh, Dharini Veeraraghavan and Abhilasha Chellam

Three students of 2nd Year KVC learning from Smt. Radha Namboodiri rendered Papanasam Sivan's kriti *Maata Innum Vaata* in ragam Sriranjani with great feeling. They were accompanied on the mridangam by Prajesh C. Nair.



◀ (l to r) Rajeshwari, A.K.Gayathry, M.S.Suja and Krithika R.

Four of her special class students sang Tanjore Ponniah Pillai's kriti *Mahadeva Manohari* in ragam Devamanohari set to Adi Talam doing full justice to the good pathantharam. They were accompanied very well on the violin by Dharini Veeraraghavan and on the mrudangam by Prajesh C.Nair.

Two veena students of the 3rd Year, training under Smt.Anuradha Srivatsan played Dikshitar's *Saraswati Vidhiyuvati* in ragam Hindolam nicely. They were followed by two students each, of 4th and 6th Year, who played Tyagaraja's *Raghunayaka* in Hamsadhvani neatly. They were accompanied on the mrudangam by Shri S.Gopakumar's student, Ganesh Narayanan.



(l to r) Jayam Jayaram, Vidya M., Sudha Mani (Veena)

Three students of Carnatic veena, 2nd Year, learning under Smt.Mythili Sampatkumar played two soulful bhajans. *Kaun Bataave* of Sant Kabirdas was in ragam Saarang and Mirabai's *Mohe laage lagan* in Hindolam. Three of her 7th Year students played *Sringara lahari* of Mysore Vasudevachar in Nilambari very beautifully. Good mrudangam support for both groups was by Ganesh Narayanan.



(l to r) Aatish Gawand (Tabla), Savio Unhavne (Vocal)

After the exposition by the Carnatic music students, it was the turn of the Hindustani section. Eighteen students of 1st Year (Batch1) learning vocal music under Smt.Sharmila Pendse sang sargam in rag Yaman. Fifteen students of 1st Year (Batch2) learning under her sang a chota khayal in Alaiya Bilawal. Five of her 2nd Year students sang rag Vrindavani Sarang. They received good applause.

Savio Unhavne, a 3rd Year student of Shri Suresh Degwekar sang a chota khayal, a Trital bandish "*Gundela*" in Bageshri with a robust and clear voice. Two of his students of 4th Year sang rag Malkauns. Prasad Patwardhan of 5th Year sang rag Bahar set to Teen tal. They

did their mentor proud. For all these performances, good Tabla sangat was provided by Aatish Gawand, an ex-student of Shri Milind Joshi.

Four Hindustani sitar students of 5th, 6th and 7th Years learning under Shri P.V.Parchure played a satisfying Alap,Jhod and Jhala of Baba Alladiya Khan in rag Hemant followed by Pandit Kartik



(l to r) Mayur Gajbhiye (Tabla), Anjana Ray, Bhushan Dhabekar, Rupa Padmanabhan, Sandeep Wagh (Sitar), Rushikesh Mohite (Tabla)

Kumar's composition in Rupak tal. Students of Shri Milind Joshi Mayur Gajbhiye and Rushikesh Mohite provided able tabla sangat.



(l to r) Mayur Gajbhiye (Tabla), Savio Unhagne, Avik Samantha, Soumik Samantha (Harmonium), Rushikesh Mohite (Tabla)

Four Hindustani harmonium students of 2nd Year learning under Shri Vinay Vasant Dalvi played rag Bhupali. Four of his students of 2nd and 6th Year played rag sarang. Four of his students of 3rd, 4th and 5th Years played rag Bhimplas in Teen tal.



◀ (l to r) Atharv Navadkar, Ruchir Bachim, Sangeeta Chalke, Shravil Dandekar, (Tabla), Milind Joshi (Harmonium)

Five students of Tabla learning under Shri Rajan Singh Thakur of 3rd, 4th, 5th Year and an ex-student played Teen tal. Four of the 2nd and 5th Year students of Tabla learning from Shri Milind Joshi played Teen

tal-1 Kayda and 1 Palta. One each of his 5th, 6th, 7th Year students and an ex-student played Trital and its variations. Three of them had ably accompanied the singers as well as Sitar and Harmonium players.

Since the Bharata Natyam section was presenting a thematic presentation, 'Purandara Vaibhava' on 13th July at the Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium, it did not participate in the Guru Purnima Celebrations this year.

This was a good beginning to a new concept introduced in the Vidyalaya and will gather more and more strength in the years to come.

Papanasam Sivan, Oothukadu Venkatasubbier & Gopalakrishna Bharati Day
19th July 2014

Nalini Dinesh



(l to r) S. Gopakumar (mridangam), V.S. Amarnath Sury (vocal), Vimarshini Jairam (violin)

It was an overflowing hall that greeted the first performer of the evening, which was dedicated to these three famous Tamil composers and the performer did not disappoint either. Amarnath Sury, managing committee member, carried his audience with him with great élan on the basis of strong fundamentals - a sonorous voice with good shruti alignment, excellent sahitya enunciation and feel for the lyrics, commendable breath control and above all, a calm and unassuming demeanour on stage exuding quiet confidence.

He started his recital with the lively *Pranavakaram*, an Arabhi kriti of Oothukadu, which this writer has seen being performed in dance recitals to great effect. Sivan's *Shri Valli Devasenapate* in Natabhairavi and *Unnaiyallal* in Kalyani were followed by Gopalakrishna Bharati's *Sabhapathikku* in Abhogi and *Irakkam varamal* in Behag. There was a brief alapana in Kalyani and Abhogi. The rendering of compositions was emotive and evocative. Raga alapana is an area that would require more focus.



(l to r) S. Gopakumar (mridangam), N.D. Vijaykumar (vocal), Vimarshini Jairam (violin)

Yet another good concert awaited the listeners that evening, that of N.D. Vijaykumar whose voice was perfectly aligned to shruti and whose every rendition was laden with raga bhava. The two brief alapanas - of Todi and Shankarabharanam - brought out the essence of the ragas even within such a short duration. The kritis rendered were *Thaye Yashoda* of Venkata Kavi and

Mahalakshmi of Sivan respectively. The opening item was Sivan's Sanskrit composition in Devagandhari *Sharade Veena* followed by his *Venkataramana* in Latangi. The concert closed with Sivan's *Naan our vilayattu bommaiya* in Navarasa Kannada and Gopalakrishna Bharati's *Innamum Sandeha* in Keeravani. Better sahitya enunciation would have enhanced the recital.

Vimarshini Jairam and S. Gopakumar provided able support on the violin and mrudangam respectively. The evening's very competent anchor was Jayashri Suresh. Smt. Santhosh Rajan, Convenor of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya, also spoke a few words after the first recital, congratulating Shri Sury and noting that this was the first time a managing committee member had himself taken the stage for performing, which was no mean achievement, considering the amount of hard work and practice that was needed to even gain the confidence to perform in front of an audience.

Muthu Thandavar, Arunachala Kavirayar & Other Tamil Composers' Day 9th August 2014:

Vasumathi Arvind



◀ (l to r) Aditya Rajagopalan (Mrudangam), Kalyani Srinivasan (Vocal), Sunder Balakrishnan (Violin)

Kalyani Srinivasan commenced her recital with Periasami Thooran's *Gananadhane* in Abhogi after which she rendered Muthu Thandavar's *Sevikka Vendum* in Andolika. A well sung alapana of Poorvikalyani preceded Neelakanta Sivan's *Ananda Natamaduvur*. Ambujam Krishna's *Guruvayurappane* in Ritigowla

and a slow rendition of Arunachala Kavirayar's *Charanam Charanam Raghurama* in Asaveri followed. The high points of Kalyani Srinivasan's recital were her very good and clear sahitya enunciation with artha bhavam and a soulful rendering of all the kritis.



◀ (l to r) Aditya Rajagopalan (Mrudangam), Divyalakshmi V. Iyer (Vocal), Sunder Balakrishnan (Violin)

Ganapathi Sthabadi's *Guru Arulum* in Abhogi was the opening item of Divyalakshmi V. Iyer's recital. This was followed by Thanjavur Shankara Iyer's *Manasara Mathiyani* in Saramathi. Neelakanta Sivan's *Shambo Mahadeva* in Bowli, Ambujam Krishna's *Om Namo*

Narayana in Karnaranjani, Arunachala Kavirayar's *Yaro Ivar Yaro* in Bhairavi were the other kritis that were rendered by Divyalakshmi. She concluded her recital with Lalitha Dasar's *Shenthamarai Poovey* in Suddha Dhanyasi. Divyalakshmi V. Iyer's recital was marked by the bhava-laden rendering of all the kritis and her open-throated singing with a powerful voice.

Both artistes were ably supported on the violin by Sunder Balakrishnan and on the mrudangam by Aditya Rajagopalan.

Praveena Gouthaman compered the programme.

S.Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure Concert 22nd August 2014

Jyothi Mohan

The S.Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure concert held on Friday 22nd August 2014 featured Carnatic vocal concerts by young talent.



(l to r) Ganesh Narayanan (Mrudangam), Aditya Sundaresan, Akshathaa Seshan and Tanishta Kumar (Vocal), Vimarshini Jairam (Violin)

The first concert was by Kum. Akshathaa Seshan, Kum. Tanishta Kumar and Master Aditya Sundaresan. They are Carnatic vocal students of Smt. J. Susheela Mani, at Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya. Akshathaa has consistently stood 1st in the Sangeetha Vidyalaya exams every year. Tanishta is also undergoing training in Hindustani music, veena and also Bharatanatyam. Aditya is a distinction holder in Trinity School for speech and drama. They began the programme with the Bhairavi Ata Tala varnam *Viriboni*, a composition of Pacchimiri Adiyappayya ably sung in 2 speeds. Puliur Doraiswamy Iyer's *Sarasiruhasanapriye* in ragam Nattai which was taken up next was sung well. The trio took turns at singing the ragam *Simhendramadhyamam*. The raga was elaborated effectively by all three. *Ninnenammiti*, a kriti of Mysore Vasudevachar set to Misra Chapu talam was well-rendered. *Niraval* and *kalpana swarams* were sung in turns. Mention must be made of Akshathaa Seshan's confidence and strong voice. The group showed good imagination and training. They rounded off the concert with a *tillana*.

The 2nd concert of the evening was by Kum. Dharini Veeraraghavan. She has completed the 7 year course from our Vidyalaya. She is also a CCRT Scholarship holder. She is now pursuing her second year diploma in music from the Sabha under the able guidance of her Guru Smt. Radha Namboodiri & Smt. Susheela Mani. She is also learning violin from the Sabha and is in 6th year.



(l to r) Ganesh Narayanan (Mrudangam), Dharini Veeraraghavan (Vocal), Vimarshini Jairam (Violin)

She was a finalist in the Jaya TV Carnatic Music Idol in the Junior Category and has won various prizes and endowment awards. She was recently awarded the Sri Shanmukhananda Bharat Ratna Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi fellowship in

Music, awarded to young and promising artistes.

She began with the evocative Sahana varnam *Karunimpa* by Trivottiyur Thyagaiyyer, set to Aditalam. After a brief sketch of Hindolam she sang *Govardhana Gireesham* of Muthuswamy Dikshitar with good feeling. A brisk *Nenarunchi nanu* of Tyagaraja in Malavi, came next, with the chittaswara sung at a very fast pace with clarity. Kalyani came in for elaboration. She explored the delicate nuances of the raga, with great maturity. The leisurely unfolding of the raga was well appreciated by the audience. Muthuswamy Dikshitar's *Bhajare re Chittha* set to Misra Chapu talam was the kriti chosen for the evening. The pathantharam was solid and she did full justice to it with her well-modulated voice. Niraval and kalpana swarams were of a high order, belying her age. She concluded the concert with a well-rendered *Parulanna mata*, a javali of Dharmapuri Subbarayar in ragam Kapi. It was a well-planned concert.

Violin accompaniment for both concerts was by Kum.Vimarshini Jairam. She is a 'B' Grade Artiste (vocal) of All India Radio (Mumbai), learning vocal music from Smt.Radha Namboodiri. She is an accomplished violinist as well and has accompanied several junior and senior vocalists. She has been a participant in violin ensembles conducted by her Guru Kalaimamani Kum. A Kanyakumari. Mrudangam accompaniment for both the concerts was by Ganesh Narayanan. Currently he is learning mrudangam under Shri S. Gopakumar at the Vidyalaya in the 6th year.

Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande Day 13th September 2014

Jyothi Mohan

Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande Day was celebrated on Saturday, 13th September 2014, at the Jasubhai Convention Hall. The singers featured were Ms Apoorva Gokhale and Dr. Varada Godbole.



(l to r) Hare Krishna Rath (Tabla), Dr. Varada Godbole (Vocal), Siddhesh Bicholkar (Harmonium)



(l to r) Hare Krishna Rath (Tabla), Apoorva Gokhale (Vocal), Siddhesh Bicholkar (Harmonium)

Dr. Varada Godbole who is an established classical vocalist, trained initially under Smt.Lilatai Shelar. Later she underwent exhaustive training in Khayal gayki under Pt.A.K. Abhyankar of Kirana Gharana and also from Pt.Yeshwant Mahale of Agra Gharana and Pt. Madhukarbua Joshi of Gwalior Gharana. She was also fortunate to learn from Pt.Ajay Pohankar and Smt.Sushilatai Pohankar. She was trained in Natya Sangeet by Smt. Manik Varma. She is a Sangeetacharya from Akhil Bharatiya Gendharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal standing 1st in India, winning 9 awards including the most prestigious Pt.Vishnu Digambar Paluskar Award. A topper in M.A.(Music) from Mumbai University she is the recipient of several awards and scholarships.

Dr. Varada Godbole is a versatile artiste performing the light classical genres of natyasangeet, abhangs, thumris and ghazals in addition to her classical repertoire.

She commenced her recital with Rag Puriya dhanashree. She unfolded the rag in a leisurely manner with beautiful nuances. A khayal in Madhya lay Jhap tal, *Tere daras ki falsa karat sab* was

followed by a tarana in drut Ek Tal, *Haiyya dostanu tanana Badami*. Her recital was marked by quicksilver taans and paltas with her strong but very pliable voice. Her erudition was evident in her rendering.

Smt. Apoorva Gokhale has carved a niche for herself as one of the well-known younger vocalists of the Gwalior Gharana. Hailing from a family of renowned musicians, she was groomed by her grandfather Gayanacharya Pandit Gajananrao Joshi and her great grandfather Pt. Antubua Joshi who was a famous court musician in the erstwhile state of Aundh. Later she learnt in true shishya-parampara tradition from her uncle Pt. Madhukarrao Joshi as well as her father Shri Manohar Joshi and aunt Dr. Sucheta Bidkar. She also received guidance from Pt. Ulhas Kashalkar, Pt. Shankar Abhyankar, Smt. Manik Bhide, Smt. Ashwini Bhide Deshpande, Pt. Yeshwant Mahale and Pt. Arun Kashalkar. She is a recipient of several awards and prizes.

She began with a vilambit khayal in rag Yaman. *Jiya Maanat Naahi* was sung to Jhoomra Tal. Her delineation of Yaman had very aesthetic touches and the development was very graceful. Endowed with a melodious and dexterous voice, improvisations in Yaman reflected her creativity. That as well as her rendering of the drut composition, *Ghungaroo baaje lugava* bore a distinct stamp of Gwalior Gharana.

Both artistes were accompanied on the tabla by Shri Hare Krishna Rath, a disciple of Pt. Yogesh Samsi. The harmonium accompaniment by Shri Siddesh Bicholkar, a disciple of the veteran Pt. Tulsidas Borkar embellished the performance. The evocative touches he played in Yaman were much appreciated.

Saraswati Puja Celebration 2nd October 2014 & Vidyarambham 3rd October 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



(l to r) Venkatesh Sankaranarayanan (Mrudangam), Bhavani Srinivasan, Kanakavalli Santhanam, Hemamalini Arun, Sunita Ganesh and Siddhi Krishnamoorthy (Vocal), Vanamala Dixit (Violin)

On 2nd October 2014, Saraswati puja was conducted in the evening followed by a rendering of Navaratri kritis of Maharaja Swati Tirunal by Bhavani Srinivasan, Siddhi Krishnamoorthy, Hemamalini Arun, Sunita Ganesh and Kanakavalli Santhanam, all students of Sangeeta Kalacharya Smt. Kalyani Sharma. While we associate the Maharaja's compositions with Padmanabha Swamy of the famous temple of Tiruvananthapuram, he has also composed kritis on various deities around the courtyard of the temple. Navaratri kritis are a set of kritis on Devi typically sung during Navaratri. The significance of this year's presentation was that it was a celebration of the bicentenary year of Maharaja Swati Tirunal.

Legend has it that Kambar the famous poet used to worship Goddess Saraswati in a temple situated in Padmanabhapuram. When his health deteriorated he extracted a promise out of the ruling Chera king that the Navaratri festival would be conducted annually without any interruptions. This is followed to this day by the Royal Family of Travancore. During the first 3 days Devi is worshipped as Saraswati, the next 3 days as Lakshmi & last 3 days as Durga.

The Navaratri kritis rendered were *Devijagatjanani* in Sankarabharanam, *Pahimam Shri Vageeshwari* in Kalyani, *Devi Pavane* in Saveri, *Bharati Mamava* in Thodi, *Janani Mamavameve* in Bhairavi, *Saroruhaasana Jaave* in Pantuvarali, *Janani Pahi* in Suddha Saveri, *Pahijanani Santatam* in Natakurinji and *Pahi Parvatanandini* in Arabhi. Introduction for each kriti was given by Siddhi Krishnamoorthy.

The singers were accompanied on the violin by Vanamala Dixit and on the mrudangam by Venkatesh Sankaranarayanan.

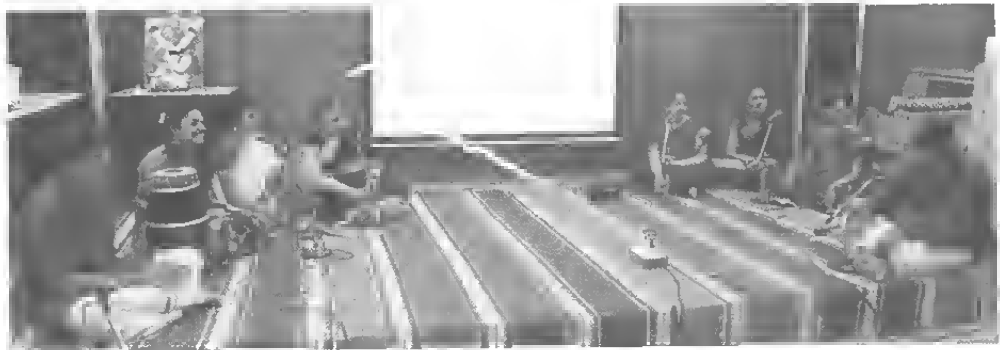


Group Rendering by Faculty and Students of the Vidyalyaya

The preliminary puja for Vidyarambham was held from 9am in the Jasubhai Convention Hall. This was followed by a vocal group rendering of *Sarali Varisai*, *Shri Gananatha* (Geetam), *Varaveena* (Geetam) and *Shri Saraswati* (Muthuswami Dikshitar's kriti in Arabhi raga) by all faculty members (Carnatic & Hindustani) and present students of the Vidyalyaya. Initiation classes for the old students commenced after the group rendition.

Muthuswamy Dikshitar Day 1st November 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



(l to r) Aditya Rajagopalan (Mrudangam), Priya Subramanian, Kanakalakshmi Swaminathan, Muthulakshmi Vedanarayan, Parvathi Ramani (Bhanu), Janani Balakrishnan, Rajeshwari Swaminathan (Vocal), Vishwanath Ramaswamy (Mukund) (Violin)

The programme was a thematic presentation on Panchalinga kritis of Muthuswamy Dikshitar by Muthulakshmi Vedanarayan and her students- Kanakalakshmi Swaminathan, Janani Balakrishnan, Parvati Ramani (Bhanu), Priya Subramanian and Rajeshwari Swaminathan.

Legend has it that Lord Shiva manifested Himself in the form of the five basic elements which make up the universe- earth, water, fire, air and ether. Muthuswamy Dikshitar composed the Panchalinga kritis at five temples each dedicated to one element: Kanchipuram (earth- Prithvi Lingam), Thiruvanaikkaval (at Trichy) (Water- Appu Lingam or Jala Lingam), Thiruvannamalai (Fire- Agni Lingam or Tejolinga), SriKalahasti (Air- Vayulingam) and Chidambaram (ether- Akasha Lingam).

The programme commenced with a highly professional PowerPoint presentation. The shloka *Kamakshim* in Bhairavi was sung by Muthulakshmi followed by the kriti *Chintaya ma kandamoola* in the same raga set to Rupaka Talam which was sung by her and her students. This kriti was in praise of the Prithvi Linga.

Jambupathe in Yamuna Kalyani was the next kriti sung by the group in praise of the Appu Linga or Jala Linga. It was preceded by the shloka *Kshetram Gajaranyam* also in Yamuna Kalyani.

A shloka in Saranga and the kriti *Arunachalanatham* in Rupaka Talam were rendered glorifying the Agni or Tejo Linga.

Shri Kalahasteesa in the raga Huseni set to Khandachapu talam was rendered after the shloka *Paschinapi Mukham*. The temple at Shri Kalahasti, also known as Dakshin Kailash is the abode (Swayambhu Kshetram) of the Vayu Linga.

The shloka *Chidambaram iti* prefaced the kriti *Ananda Natana Prakasham* in Kedaram set to Mishra chapu Talam. The kriti describes the glory of the Akasha Linga in the temple at Chidambaram.

All the kritis were rendered with excellent sahitya enunciation and bhava.

Violin accompaniment was by Vishwanath Ramaswamy (Mukund). Aditya Rajagopalan accompanied the singers on the mridangam. Reshma Ravi compered the programme.

S.Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure Concert 22nd November 2014



(L to r) Ananta Patekar (Tabla),
Jinansh Dalal (Harmonium)



Atish Gawand (Tabla),
Soumik Samantha (Harmonium)

The S.Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure Concert held on Friday, 22nd November 2014 at Jasubhai Convention hall featured two harmonium recitals and a Bharatanatyam performance by students of the Vidyalyaya.

Jinansh Datal, a 3rd Year student of harmonium under the able tutelage of Shri Vinay Dalvi played Raag Bhoop in Teen Tal. He was accompanied on the tabla by Ananta Patekar, a 6th Year student of Shri Milind Joshi. Soumik Samantha, a 7th Year student in harmonium under Shri Vinay Dalvi, played a bada khayal in Puriya Dhanasri in *ati vilambit*, *vilambit* and *madhya lay*. He ended his performance with a *dhun* in Raag Durga set to Teen Tal.



◀ *Bharatanatyam performance by 15 students*

The Bharatanatyam performance involved 15 students, from the 4th Year onwards. The *Tisra Alaripu* performed by Pranamyia Rajeevan, Mokshita and Princy was followed by Harikeshanallur Muthaiah Bhagawathar's *Sarasamukhi* in Gowdamalhaar which was performed beautifully by Priyadarshini with support from Viji and Reena. This

was followed by the *poorvangam* of the Nattakurinji varnam *Swami Naan Undan Adimai* of Papanasam Sivan. The group choreography of jatis made for interesting viewing and stories depicted in *sancharis* were engrossing. Pranamyia, Priyadarshini, Anindita, Paloma, Aashvi, Kavya, Mahima, Pooja and Krishna danced the varnam. Subramania Bharati's *Teerada Vilayattu Pillai* provided some funny moments as Krishna teased the gopis. Priyadarshini as Krishna and Reena, Viji and Dipali as gopis, lived their parts. The performance ended with a Meera Bhajan *Charana raj mahima* in ragamalika danced by Shweta, Reena, Viji, Dipali and Priyadarshini. Priyadarshini, Reena, Viji and Pranamyia deserve special mention for good nriitta as well as abhinaya.

Scholarship Awards 2013-2014 & Mahakavi Subramanya Bharatiyar Day 20th December 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



◀ *Akshataa Seshan receiving her scholarship award from Shri V.S. Amarnath Sury*

The Annual Scholarship Awards have been an important incentive programme, encouraging students of the Vidyalaya and inculcating healthy competition among students and teachers. In the year 2013-14, there were 95 scholarship awards as against 35 endowments. 52 students of the Vidyalaya bagged scholarship awards out of which 21 students received more than one award. Scholarship awards were distributed to the meritorious students by the Convenor of the Vidyalaya, Shri V.S. Amarnath Sury.

Faculty and students of Mulund Fine Arts Society gave a well-coordinated presentation of Bharatiyar's songs, all of which were sung as ragamalikas. They began with *Kakkaichiraginile* in Hamsadhwani and Bageshri followed by *Paarukkulle Nalla Nadu* in Keeravani, Atana and Bhowli. *Chuttum Vizhi Chudardhan* in Bhimplas, Behag and Kanada was set to Adi Talam (Tisra Nadai). *Chandiran Oliyil* was rendered in Chandrakauns, Hamsadhwani and Kanada. *Payum Oli Nee Enakku* also in Adi Talam (Tisra Nadai) was sung in Amritavarshini, Kharaharapriya and



Group Rendering of Bharatiyar's songs by Faculty & Students of Mulund Fine Arts Society

Madhuvanti. They concluded their programme with *Veera Sudhandiram* in *Desh*, *Valaji*, *Kanada* and *Shivaranjani*. The programme stood out because they sang in one voice with perfect sruthi alignment and clear sahitya enunciation.



(l to r) K. Prasad (Mrudangam), Lakshmi Krishnamurthy (Vocal), Rajashri Sridhar Prasad (Violin)

Lakshmi Krishnamurthy has a powerful and sonorous voice with good shruti alignment and clear diction. Beginning with a viruttam in *Nattai*, she went on to sing *Karpaga Vinayagane*. A good alapana of *Kharaharapriya* preceded *Muruga Muruga*. *Vellai Thamarai* in *Bhimplas* for which a viruttam was sung and *Asai Mugam* in *Jhonpuri* were good renditions. An alapana of *Kalyani* was followed by *Ujjayani* in *Chapu Talam*. Lakshmi Krishnamurthy concluded her recital with *Solla Vallayo*, a ragamalika and *Nenjukku Neediyum* in *Sindhubhairavi*. The rendering of the viruttams was soulful with both raga bhava and sahitya bhava.

The artistes for the evening were accompanied on the violin by Rajashri Sridhar Prasad and on the mrudangam by K. Prasad. Dhanalakshmi Sundaram did a good job as the compere. The programme was held in association with Bharati Medical & Research Foundation.

Answers to Quiz on Sangeeta and Natya

1. The Tamil Trinity (also known as the **Tamil Moovar**) commonly refers to the three Tamil composers Muthu Tandavar, Arunachala Kavi and Marimuttha Pillai, who lived five decades before the Tiruvavur Trinity or the Trinity of Carnatic Music. However, according to some experts, the reference is to the Tevaram Trinity, viz., Tiruvavukkarasar (also known as Appar), Sundarar and Tirugnanasambandar.
2. According to some musicologists, the reference to the bifurcation of Indian music into Carnatic and Hindustani systems appears for the first time in *Sangeeta Sudhakaram* written by Haripala early in the 14th century
3. The one outstanding feature of Indian art music is the concept of vaggeyakara, one who conceives the lyric and also sets it to music often simultaneously. 'Vag' is word and 'geya' is music. In the West this combination does not exist in art music though it does in pop music. Thus Mendelssohn composed incidental music for the *Wedding March* of *The Midsummer Night's Dream* of Shakespeare. A vaggeyakara is an architect of both vag (word) and geya (sound or music). The term composer, as used in the West, refers to the person who sets the music (sangeet) to the lyric (geet). The unique combination of geetkar and sangeetkar in one person in the Indian system is brought out by the fact that there is no equivalent single word in English for vaggeyakara. When Tyagaraja sang a kriti it was a finished product even as it was being conceived in his mind. It was complete with not only sahitya but also raga swarupa, tala, gamakas, sangatis, etc. It was an integrated package.
4. Todi
5. The Kudumiyanmalai inscriptions in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu have the swara notations for the first time in the caves. It was the contribution of Mahendra Varman, the Pallava king belonging to the 7th century ACE.
6. They are suddha swaraksharam, suchita swaraksharam and suddha-suchita swaraksharam. In the case of suddha swaraksharam there is a straight correspondence between the swara and the letter or syllable. An example is *Padasaraja* in the charanam of the Navaraga varnam. The first three syllables are sung to the swaras pa, dha and sa. In suchita swaraksharam the correspondence is between modified letters of the sahitya and the underlying swaras. Syama Sastri's Saveri kriti starts with *Durusuga*. Du, ru and su are the aksharas or syllables that are matched by the underlying dha, ri and sa. ('ga' in the sahitya is not in the swarakshara mode.) Suchita is indicative and is a pointer to the underlying note. Suddha-Suchita swarakshara is a combination of the other two. An example is in the pallavi of *Sarasaksha* in Pantuvarali of Swati Tirunal. The first three syllables sa, ra and sa are matched by sa, ri and sa.
7. The height of intellectual achievement was achieved in a Telugu swarakshara pada varnam, also known as swarasthana varnam, in Todi attributed to Ramaswami Dikshitar, father of Muthuswami Dikshitar. It starts with *sarigaani paamarini ni pada*. M Balamuralikrishna, a master musician and vaggeyakara of contemporary times, was perhaps inspired by Dikshitar when he composed a kriti in swaraksharam in Todi starting with *Maa maanini ni dhaama gani ni daasarini gaadaa*.
8. Tyagaraja indicates the arohana and avarohana in the pallavi itself to help the singer in understanding an apoorva or rare raga. Thus the kriti *Paluku kanda chak keranu gherune* has the ascending and descending swaras: *Paluku kanda chak* (sa ga ma pa sa in the arohana) and *keranu gherune* (sa ni dha ma ga ri sa in the avarohana) in the pallavi
9. Talapakkam Annamacharya

10. Appa Jalgaonkar (2000) and Tulsidas Borkar (2006).
11. Layakari bola-upaj (*The Musical Heritage of India*, MR Gautam, p.96)
12. Modulation is the near-equivalent of Srutibhedam or Grahabhedam in Western music. Its purpose is not to create a new scale but to provide for harmonic variety. It also helps to make longer compositions possible because changes of key contribute to a balance between the elements of repetition and contrast and thus help to sustain the interest of the listener. (*Music*, Daniel T Politoske)
13. Kathak (*Kathak*, Shovana Narayan)
14. To fulfil the four conditions of anga shuddha (purity of movement) the four lakshanas of an adavu must be correctly performed. They are sthanaka, nritta hasta, chari and hastakshetra. (*A Dictionary of Bharata Natya*, U S Krishna Rao)
15. Stayibhava is the expression of a sentiment or feeling or the dominant state of mind of the dancer while rasa is its reciprocation in the rasika. For every stayibhava there is a corresponding rasa, for example, karuna is the rasa for the bhava shoka.

Scores (one mark for each correct answer)

- Less than 6 : Hope is eternal! Start on *sarali varisai*.
 6-10 : Good progress! Fit to learn *varnam*.
 11-15 : Congratulations! Proceed to Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi.

FORM IV

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I, Shri V.S. Amarnath Sury, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

"Nedunurigaru"---Unpeered Classicist of Carnatic Music

N. Hariharan



◀ Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy

The world of Carnatic Music has lost its foremost classicist in the demise of Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy at Visakhapatnam on December 8, 2014. He was 87 and is survived by a son and two daughters. He performed at the Music Academy for five decades which honoured him in December 1991 with the title Sangeetha Kalanidhi. He had developed a style of his own which was well-rooted in tradition. Affectionately called "Nedunurigaru" by musicians and music lovers, he was a sweet-voiced performer and a dedicated teacher for decades. His singular achievement was setting to ragas with notation 108 compositions of Annamacharya, the renowned poet-bhakta of Lord Venkateswara. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam made the wise decision of entrusting its project of popularising the works of the 15th century saint-composer Annamacharya who preceded the trinity of Carnatic music by over a century to Nedunurigaru. He taught Annamacharya kirtanas to a large number of pupils, including the celebrity vocalist Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi.

As a music concert reviewer of "The Times of India," I had the good fortune to have enjoyed his style soaked in "rich classicism and fine aesthetics" as violin vidwan Lalgudi G.J. R. Krishnan says in his tribute. He deeply valued tradition and his pursuit of musical knowledge was driven by reason. Violinist Lalgudi G. J. R. Krishnan had accompanied Nedunurigaru at several concerts and acknowledges the "experiences" he had gained from "one of the finest masters of classical music." Krishnan's father, the renowned violin maestro Lalgudi G. Jayaraman had been Nedunurigaru's accompanist for hundreds of concerts during his life since 1968, in Coimbatore, Visakhapatnam and Baroda. "They shared a unique relationship brimming with love and mutual respect," says Krishnan. Lalgudi introduced "Nedunurigaru" in 1970 to the Madras audience and their combination won big acclamation. As contemporaries they exchanged ideas constantly, often writing letters where they fondly addressed each other as "My dear brother....", remembers Krishnan. Nedunurigaru used to stay at the TTD guest house which was very close to Lalgudi Jayaraman's house on Ramanujam Street. Krishnan used to carry the Miraj Tambura to his father's friend staying in the guest house. Nedunurigaru would visit Jayaraman whenever he came to Chennai, recalls Krishnan.

Nedunuri Krishnamurthy was born at Kothapalli in Pithapuram taluq of Andhra Pradesh on October 10, 1927. He first joined the Maharaja's College of Music at Vizianagaram in 1940. He received his initial lessons in violin and vocal from late Shri Dwaram Narasinga Rao Naidu. In 1949, he came under the influence of Sangeetha Kalanidhi Padma Bhushan Dr Sripada Pinakapani under whose guidance he formed a style of his own, followed by many. He gave his first public concert in vocal music in 1945.

Nedunurigaru has worked as the Principal of G.V.R Government College of Music and Dance, Vijayawada, Government College of Music and Dance, Secunderabad, MR Government College of Music and Dance, Vizianagaram, and has also worked on deputation at Sri Venkateswara College of Music and Dance, Tirupati. Krishnamurthy, who established Nadasudha Tarangini trust aimed at popularising the traditional values of Carnatic music, retired from government service in 1985.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, YSR Congress President, Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed grief at the great vidwan's death and paid tributes. Naidu described Nedunurigaru as the doyen of Carnatic music. Both lauded his yeoman service to the art. The editor-in chief of the magazine "Sruti", Shri V.

Ramnarayan wrote in "Deccan Chronicle" that Nedunuri Krishnamurthy was a role model for aspiring vocalists. The maestro spoke of his gurus with deep bhakti. He had a lifetime of listening to the great masters "as a form of tapas". Comparing him with the departed vidwan R.K. Srikantan, his senior by some eight years, Ramnarayan stated both had many similarities, though "different in school and method". He recalls his pleasure in recording in print his perception of their kutcheris as the season's best. Theirs was the grand, chaste music of the old school. While Srikantan's vocalisation was more open-mouthed, Nedunuri's voice was silken, delicately nuanced, but equally committed to adherence to "akaram", the usage of the vowel "aa" for the better part of a concert.

Nedunurigar was "a kind and affectionate teacher, but was a stickler for old virtues of fidelity to raga and lyrics, not to mention proper vocalization", stresses editor Ramnarayan. He had a good rapport with the Malladi Brothers- Sriramprasad and Ravikumar who accompanied him on the stage in a supporting role. They cancelled their concert and rushed to Visakhapatnam to join the funeral. Vidwans of the calibre of the Malladi Brothers will surely keep alive the musical values of their distinguished guru.

Honours bestowed on "Nedunurigar" were numerous. To name a few: The Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award in 2010, the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1986 and Sangeetha Kalanidhi from the Madras Music Academy in 1991. He was made the Asthana Vidwan of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam in 2010. The awards sat lightly on him. He never craved for them like some of the musicians of today.

N. Hariharan is a senior journalist who was music concert review writer of The Times of India, Mumbai.

OBITUARY

◀ Ivaturi Vijayeswara Rao



Eminent violin maestro of the Dwaram tradition of Carnatic music, Ivaturi Vijayeswara Rao passed away in Visakhapatnam on Saturday 18th October 2014. He was 76. Vijayeswara Rao, a child prodigy was trained by Dwaram Narasinga Rao Naidu who became a father figure to him. His prominent disciples include Pantula Rama, Manda Sudha Rani, Bhallmudi Sarda, Jayanthi Rama and Kalaimamani A.Kanyakumari. He was a staff artist of AIR Calicut and Visakhapatnam and took voluntary retirement in 1992. He was a well-honoured solo artist and a gifted accompanist who was guided by his inner vision.

T.R. Balamani : A guru par excellence

Dr. Vasumathi Badrinathan



◀ The author with Smt. T.R. Balamani

Balamani was not only my guru but my acquaintance from the golden days of my childhood. I first came into contact with Balamani years back in Matunga, when as a child I would accompany my mother the late Padma Seshadri to the music classes in the South Indian Welfare Society school classrooms. In my mind's eye I still see the evening music classes happening. And Carnatic compositions would abound from the different

classrooms in varying *shrutis* and *tempos*.

Then for several years, I visited Balamani's home for lessons. The Bhimdiwala building in the heart of the vibrant market in Matunga was a special place where I would wind my way in through rows of vegetable vendors. The strong smells and sounds of the marketplace subsided once inside her little home, which was a sanctuary apart. Here, Carnatic music came alive day in and day out. All day long, over several decades, Balamani held her music classes attended by scores of students of different ages, different professions, different life styles.

We would feverishly prepare for music competitions, avidly lap up new songs and await the next class impatiently. Every time I would pass the street, I would look up and if Balamani was at the window, she would wave. It was a gesture of a fraction of a second that sealed an unexplained bond. Both Balamani and her late husband Mani had the same affection for my brother Ravi and would always look out of the window waiting to wave out eagerly to 'the hero' as she always referred to him. Till the end, she kept Ravi close to her heart and remembered his sweet music. I do not know if in recent years, she found the same kind of bonding with her students – it was a flowing stream, more than steady students who remained long enough to build a lifelong relationship.

Balamani's little home was also where we met musicians regularly. The late Nedunuri Krishnamurthy would come often for a stay during his *kutcheris*. I have met T. K. Govinda Rao, Sripada Pinakapani, Voleti Venkateswarulu and several other stalwarts in the tiny confines of the Bhimdiwala chawl. As a child, this kind of rendezvous with musicians was interesting as one got to see a glimpse of the artiste away from the stage lights and many a curious element came to life.

Balamani's career unfolded before me as I grew up from childhood to adulthood. She was a hardworking teacher who reflected upon her profession. She painstakingly collected handwritten notations of songs that were graciously contributed by her many students, including my mother. Each time she would pull out those notations, she would remind me of my mother's painstaking efforts in copying them out, which I never of course forgot. Those were the pre-photocopy days. We would diligently copy out the songs into our notebooks. This meticulous exercise equipped me with a quick eye for notations and their beauty. An *aksharam* here, a missing syllable there, nothing missed Balamani's intent eye for notations. She took on the challenge of studying new notations and enlarging her teaching repertoire which in her later years formed the very fulcrum of her teaching. *I have added a lot of new songs this time, you must listen to them*, she would say excitedly, as she unearthed a fresh new Kotiswara Iyer, or a Swati kriti, or a roller coaster Lalgudi Tillana. This came to her with great ease as she transformed plain notes into exciting compositions be it an ancient Tiruppugazh or a contemporary composition. As time passed, she moved to photocopies and the era of hand written notations, much to my chagrin, came to an end.

Then with facility she adapted to notations in English for the comfort of a large number of students. Piles of notations remain stacked in her home in Mumbai, neatly filed and perfectly arranged so as to find them in a trice.

In the seventies and eighties, she prepared students steadily and sincerely for music competitions and unfailingly all the coveted prizes would go to her wards. This phenomenon created the 'Balamani wave' in the city and by and by, her students did her proud in one measure or the other, which slowly catapulted her to the status of a guru to reckon with.

Balamani enjoyed a special propensity for mathematics. I was always baffled by her uncanny knack for musical calculations which she achieved effortlessly. *Moonu talli, ottula eduppu, kaal idam...* It was a constant world of sums and figures that whirled in her head and which appeared to me like pure magic! She would make her mental maths with perfection and then look at her student audience with a benign smile of a *fait accompli* which would immediately win their admiration. With the same ease, she negotiated ragas comparing them, travelling from one note to the other, showing how one *gamaka* or an interval there here, changed the colour of a raga and warning students to be careful.

Her strongest skills though were in *neraval* singing. Groomed by her gurus Musiri Subramania Iyer and TK Govinda Rao, she remained ever faithful to their memory. On nostalgic days, she would recount her learning days at the Music College in erstwhile Madras. Her *neravals* were always hailed as being vintage Musiri. The juxtaposition of the lyrics, the separation of the words, the assortment of phrases, were and remain unique. Often, at the end of my performances, some *rasika* invariably recognizes the label on the *niraval* and asks me about the Musiri *bani* in my music; Balamani's stamp is always very evident in all my concerts. Balamani was equally clever with raga patterns as she was with Pallavis and improvisation. A range of 4 *kalai pallavis*, now almost extinct, used to be a canonical part of her teaching. Over the years, she perfected her pedagogy making herself indispensable to her students.

In the early eighties, she thought about a special programme on Dikshitar for the All India Radio of Mumbai in its better days. My mother and another disciple of Balamani worked on the concept for months and performed the recital together. The chaste rendering of *Chetashri* and *Saravana Bhava* still ring in my ears even thirty years later. On the whole, her music was sound, dignified, authentic and original. Above all, a no-nonsense style of music, dignified, bereft of unnecessary glitter.

From the modest classrooms of Bharatiya music school at the SIWS school, to the home classes in Matunga and then in Chembur to recent migration to Chennai which became her last journey, Balamani's career came full circle. I cherish several singular pieces I learnt from her - *Sharana Kamalalayathai*, a haunting *Tiruppugazh*, a direct inheritance from her gurus, in fascinating Chenchurutti, draped in its elusive simplicity. Or *Sri Venkata Girisam* in impeccable, uncompromised *Suruti*, *Sumasayaka*, the *varnam* in Karnataka Kapi, amongst other gems. A year ago, I was reviewing with Balamani, my choice of pieces for a special concert in Chennai based exclusively on the *Vivaadi* raga. Balamani's neurons were activated when it came to *Rasikapriya*. She unfolded an unforgettable array of raga patterns. I fumbled with my smart phone to record those precious phrases but it was over before it began. They are now recorded in my memories. If she was musically very sharp, she was also modest and ready to learn. *Can you write out in brief the explanation of a vivaadi raga so that I can explain to my students*, she last asked of me.

When Balamani migrated to Chennai at the behest of her daughter Ranjani, Chennai added one more stalwart to its musical firmament. But Mumbai undoubtedly parted forever with one of its greatest contributors to the cause of Carnatic music.

In the last few years in Mumbai, music kept the loneliness out, a constant stream of people and television kept the conversation on. Balamani left Mumbai half-heartedly. While she was happy to

be with her daughter Ranjani, her heart longed to be in the city that was her own for several decades since her marriage. Her home was her kingdom, her music books and notations her very breath. When the stream of students had left, the telephone and television kept her company, along with her faithful maid Asha bai. She left Mumbai, promising to come back in the summer of 2014 and urging me to keep myself free for a few lessons. But that promise was not kept. She never returned. Both her daughter Ranjani and Balamani's innumerable students have bequeathed parts of the musical legacy which will continue for posterity.

Such gurus are rare to come by today. I still instinctively look out for her at the window above Matunga market each time I pass by. Bhimdwala building never leaves me indifferent. Although Balamani moved out of there long back, for me it's an indelible memory of beautiful times gone by. I will miss 'teacher' as all her students fondly call her, her regular phone calls, her strong Pallakkad accent and her anecdotes.

Balamani was an early migrant into Mumbai, enmeshed herself into the life of Mumbai, made a place for herself, contributed largely to the cultural heritage of this city. The cultural landscape like all things keeps changing. This change however signals the end of an era.

Dr. Vasumathi Badrinathan, disciple of T.R.Balamani, is a vocalist, research scholar & a writer, performing both in India and on the international scene with solo concerts, lecture demonstrations and collaborative ventures with world musicians. She can be reached on vasu@vasumathi.net

OBITUARY

◀ Sitara Devi



The Queen of Kathak, Sitara Devi breathed her last on November 25th 2014, at the age of 94, after striding the Kathak stage as a colossus for close to nine decades. Sitara Devi's roots were inextricably woven to the tradition of 'kathakars', the early Kathak dancers.

She was born as Dhannolakhshmi on November 8th 1920 to the family of Brahmin 'kathakar' Sukhdev Maharaj and chose school and dance over an early wedding, as was the norm in those days. Her father, a Vaishnavite Brahmin scholar and Kathak exponent, sent her to a local school where she impressed her teachers and the local media with her performance in a dance drama, *Savitri Satyavan*. When her father learnt of it, he rechristened her as Sitara or the star and placed her under the care of her older sister for training in Kathak. By the time Sitara Devi turned 11, the family moved to Mumbai, where she impressed Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore with a three-hour solo recital. Tagore offered her a shawl and rupees fifty which Sitara Devi considered the biggest honour conferred upon her. Over the next six decades, she became a Kathak legend and was a pioneering force in bringing the genre to Bollywood. She was a vital force who stood for zest and vigour in Indian dance. Sitara Devi struggled against all odds to excel in her chosen field and brought Kathak from the domain of nautch girls to the global arena. Over the years, Sitara Devi performed all over India and abroad, including prestigious venues like Royal Albert Hall, London (1967) and the Carnegie Hall, New York (1976). Over the years, she received a number of awards, including Sangeet Natak Akadmi Award (1969), the Padma Shree (1973), Kalidas Samman (1995) and Nritya Nipuna. She was honoured with the Legends of India Lifetime Achievement Award 2011 for her contribution to the classical dance genre for over six decades. Not content with her mastery over Kathak, she enrolled as a student under Guru Kalyansundaram of the Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, when she was sixty, rubbing shoulders with tiny tots to learn the rudiments of Bharatnatyam. Her passion for learning and performing remained with her till almost the end.

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA KANCHI MAHASWAMI

SANGEETHA SANGRAHAALAY

SUMMARY OF ARCHIVES

Summary of Audios

	Carnatic	Hindustani	Total
Concerts	11,969	1,632	13,601
Duration	26,814 hours	3,450 hours	30,264 hours
Tracks	99,244	10,288	1,09,532
Size	1,511.2 GB	194.2 GB	1,705.4 GB
Classifications	345	323	668
Main Artistes Covered	1,045 Artistes	335 Artistes	1,380 Artistes
Accompanists Covered	1,182 Artistes	116 Artistes	1,298 Artistes
Venues / Sabhas Covered	356	41	397
Cities Covered	189	43	232
Years Covered	1928 to 2010	1935 to 2009	1928 to 2010
Tracks Format	Mp3 44.1 Khz. 128 kbps Stereo 16 bit		
Tag	Id3 Tag Version 1.1 and Version 2.2		

Summary of Videos

Classification	Videos	Tracks	Size
Carnatic	1,328	2,439	829.3G
Hindustani	241	394	124.7G
Devotional	1,334	1,677	433.3G
Dance	209	397	118.8G
All	3,112	4,907	1506.3G

Total Size of Archives

Carnatic Archives (Audio)	1,511.2 GB *
Hindustani Archives (Audio)	194.2 GB *
Videos - All	1,506.3 GB *
Total	3,211.7 GB *


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Members are aware of the publication of 'Shanmukha', the professional quarterly of the Sabha. It has completed 39 years of existence.

The publication has a high standing among the professionals and aficionados of music, dance and theatre and adds prestige to the Sabha's image. It is one of the few music sabhas in the country that brings out its own professional magazine. The contributions are from experts in their fields. There are reports on the activities of the Sabha. Sometimes it carries valuable articles from other professional magazines and from its own issues of the distant past that are not accessible to the readers otherwise. What is more, there are instances of the articles of 'Shanmukha' being reproduced elsewhere with the Editor's concurrence.

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